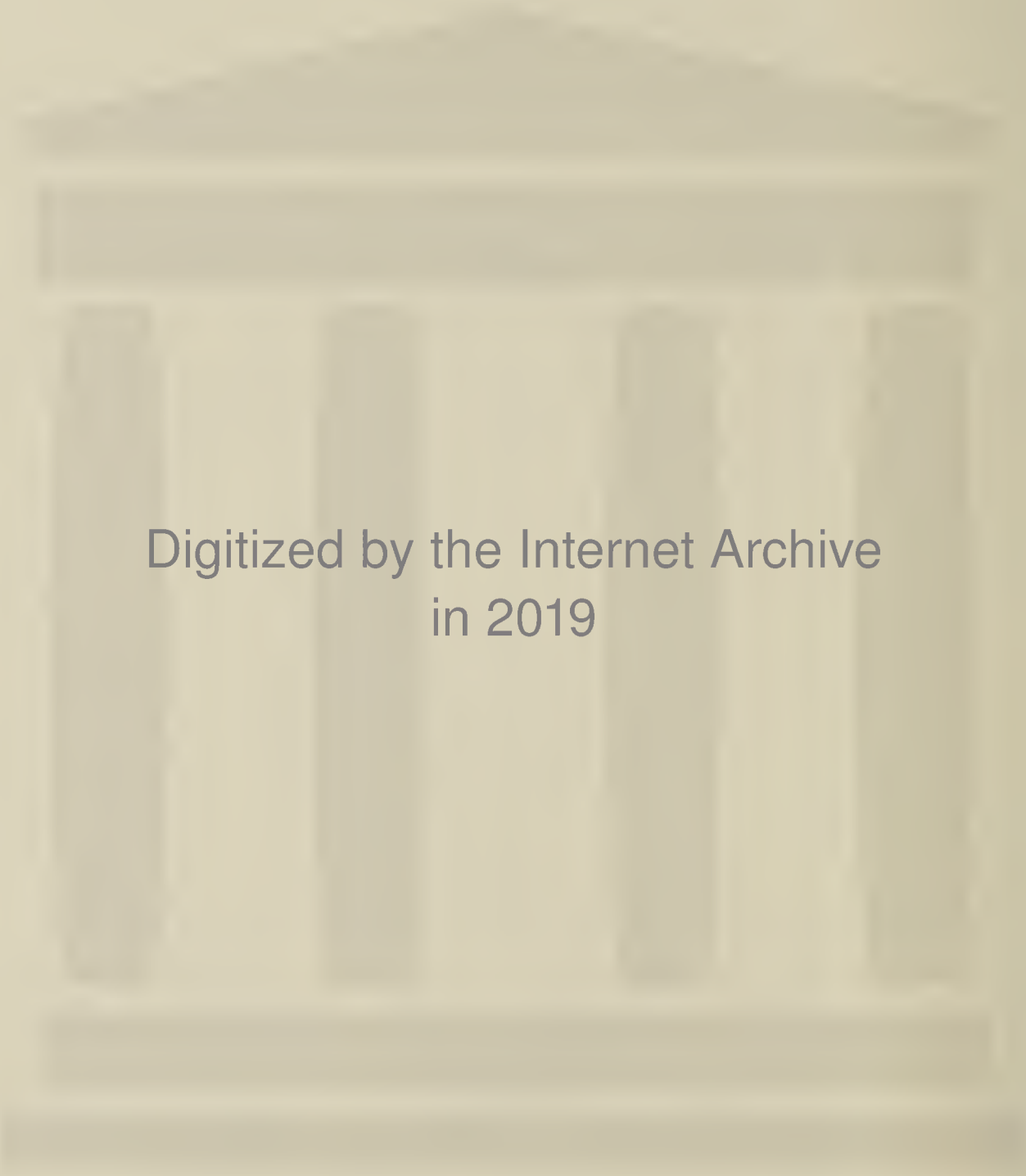






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PRIDE IN THE PAST

FAITH IN THE FUTURE

# CANTON SESQUI- CENTENNIAL 1806-1956

PUBLISHED BY THE CANTON SESQUI-CENTENNIAL COMMITTEE, INC.



CANTON SESQUICENTENNIAL  
1806-1956

A SHORT ILLUSTRATED  
HISTORY OF CANTON

*Edited and Published by*

CANTON SESQUICENTENNIAL COMMITTEE

*in conjunction with*

PHOEBE HUMPHREY CHAPTER

DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

PRINTED BY PLAINVILLE PRINTING COMPANY

## CONTENTS

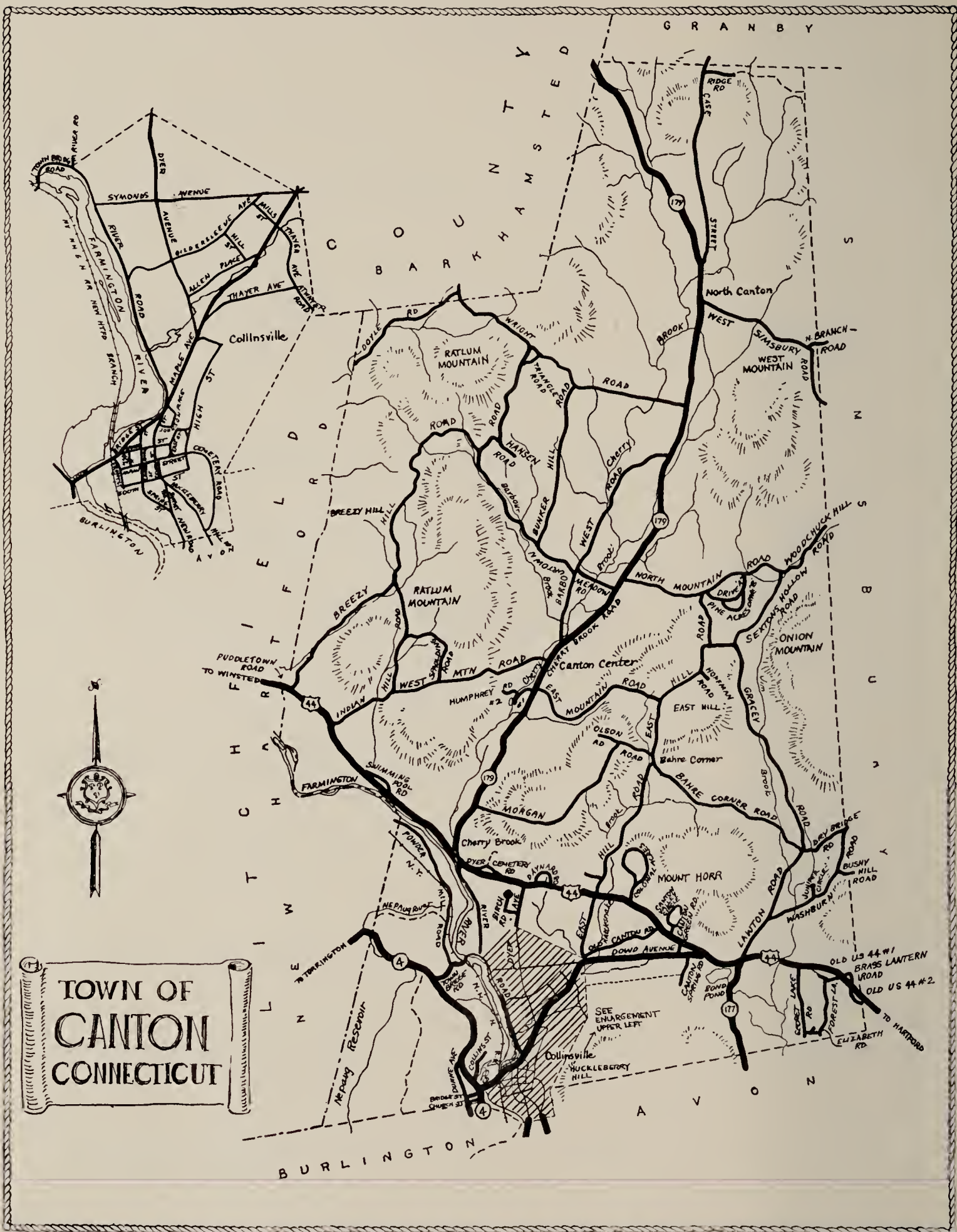
### Section I

|                                                              | <i>Page</i> |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| Origin of the Name Canton . . . . .                          | 5           |
| It Never Has Been Easy to Get Rich in Canton . . . . .       | 6           |
| Industrial Briefs . . . . .                                  | 11          |
| Changes in Town Government . . . . .                         | 14          |
| Canton Churches . . . . .                                    | 16          |
| Fifty Years of Progress and Expansion in Education . . . . . | 22          |
| Canton Public Library . . . . .                              | 30          |
| The Flood of 1955 . . . . .                                  | 32          |

### Section II

|                                                              |     |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| Alphabetical Index of House Occupants . . . . .              | 46  |
| Part I                                                       |     |
| Old Houses — East Hill, Canton and Albany Turnpike . . . . . | 50  |
| Part II                                                      |     |
| Old Houses — Canton Center, North Canton and Breezy Hill     | 87  |
| Part III                                                     |     |
| Old Houses — Collinsville . . . . .                          | 119 |
| Part IV                                                      |     |
| Early Schoolhouses . . . . .                                 | 140 |
| Part V                                                       |     |
| Churches . . . . .                                           | 144 |

## SECTION I



## The Origin of the Choice of Canton as a Name for Our Town

The following words are quoted from the historical address given by William Edgar Simonds at the town's celebration of the nation's centennial in 1876.

"The Ecclesiastical Society of West Simsbury, containing about thirteen hundred inhabitants, was incorporated as the town of Canton, by an act of the General Assembly in 1806. The name Canton, suggested by the late Ephraim Mills, is derived from a supposed likeness to a Swiss canton, the meaning of the word being to divide or set off, and the partition from Simsbury made the name appropriate."

(Ephraim Mills was Mr. Simond's wife's great grandfather)

The second reference to the naming of Canton is taken from Sylvester Barbour's Reminiscences.

"Mr. Ephraim Mills, who was born in 1782 and died in 1863, was of an age to assist in the organization of the town, in 1806, and did materially assist. In connection with the Canton centennial celebration, a query arose in my mind how it happened that the town came to have its beautiful name. I had never heard, and, so far as it has come to my knowledge, there has been nothing said about it in connection with the celebration. I began an investigation and was informed by Mr. Mills' estimable daughter, Mrs. R. O. Humphrey, whose memory goes back into the forties, that she had often heard her father say that he suggested the name. But, why Canton? It came from Mr. Mills' interest in the Swiss people and their ardent patriotism, and was suggested to his mind by their territorial divisions into cantons. The name appealed to him, partly because of its pleasant sound, and its being so easy to speak and write."

# IT NEVER HAS BEEN EASY TO GET RICH IN CANTON

BY L. K. PORRITT

It never has been easy to get rich in Canton. If you were not afraid of hard work, if you were willing and able to turn your hands to a number of different things, you could manage to make a living. But, always it has been necessary to do business on Canton's terms — not your own.

Before the first European settlers arrived, a score or so of Indians managed to keep alive in the region that now is Canton.

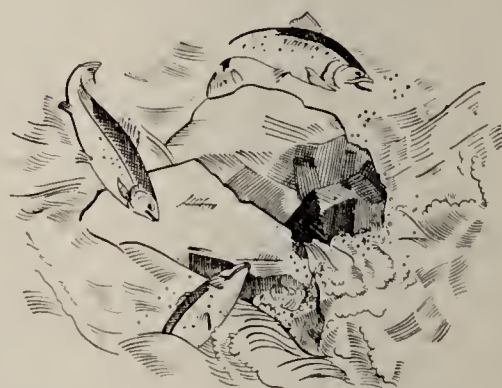
As a matter of fact, from an Indian's standpoint, this region had quite a lot to offer. There were deer, bear and rabbits in the woods. There were beaver, otter, mink, muskrat and other fur-bearing animals along the streams. But, most important, the falls at what is now Collinsville offered the last good fishing place on the Farmington River.

Three hundred years ago, the Farmington River teemed with fish. Big fish, some of them. Salmon that weighed as much as forty pounds. Shad. They weren't as big as the salmon but there were lots of them. Then there were millions of alewives. These could be eaten fresh or they could be smoked and dried. Also they made good fertilizer for the corn.

Shad, salmon and alewives. But these were not the only fish that surged up from the sea by the millions each spring to spawn in the upper reaches of the Farmington. Also, there were lamprey eels that the Indians considered a delicacy. Just why, I never quite understand. I would prefer fried inner tube. There were sea trout. Give a brook trout the chance to go to sea and he will take it eagerly and grow two or three times as big as his landlocked brothers. I have caught sea trout that would go ten pounds in the salmon rivers of Newfoundland. I've seen them as big as twelve or fifteen pounds. Big schools of big sea trout used to come up the river each spring.

There were plenty of fish in the Farmington River as far up as Collinsville, and the falls at Collinsville offered an easy place for the Indians to spear them. Above Collinsville, the Farmington broke up into its three main branches: the Nepash, the East Branch and the West Branch. From an Indian's standpoint there was a lot to recommend the Canton region as a place to make a living.

But, when the first English settlers came into the region, about two hundred and twenty years ago, it was not as easy for them as it had been for the Indians.



For one thing, they wanted a lot more out of life than just a little corn, a few fish and some skins to drape around them to protect them against the ravages of the weather. And then the shad and the salmon began to disappear. The white man did not seem to know that these fish spawned up on the gravelly reaches of the smaller streams and that, if they put dams across these streams to power their gristmills and their sawmills, the salmon could not reach their spawning beds and would soon die out.



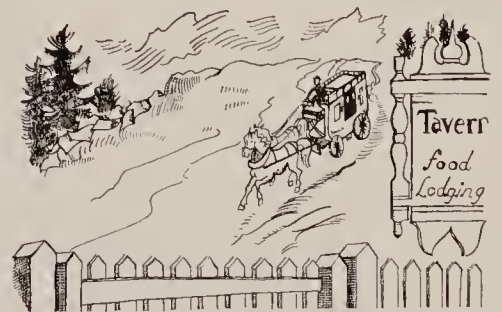
It soon became apparent to the first English settlers of this region that they had to be much more than farmers if they were to live and prosper on these rocky hillsides. For one thing, most of the farms did not have enough arable land to support a family by farming alone. Also, they needed implements, tools, clothes and furniture. Things that could not be grown but must be made. And, in those days, they had to be made at home because there were no factories, no mail order houses and money was very, very scarce.

So, for the first fifty or eighty years in the history of Canton — until after the close of the Revolution — the people of Canton lived on a subsistence basis. They raised their wheat, barley and corn. They grew flax and had flocks of sheep. They put up little shops along the mountain streams and hitched up crude lathes and saws to their homemade water wheels. Nearly everything they needed was raised, made or processed in and around their homes. Clothes from the wool of their sheep and the flax of their fields. Shoes were made in their homes, usually by the travelling shoemaker, from the hides of their horses and cattle. When they travelled, they went either on foot or on horseback for their roads were too rocky and rough for wagons or carts. Their heavy hauling they did by sleigh in the winter time when the snow ironed out some of the rough spots on the roads.

It was not until the mid-eighteen twenties that things began to change in Canton. Then a number of new influences began to be felt.

The Albany Turnpike was one of them.

Starting in the late seventeen nineties, a number of corporations were organized to build a stagecoach road between Hartford and Albany. By 1820, it had built up a large volume of traffic. Daily stagecoaches ran from Hartford to Albany. Others went from New Hartford and Winsted north into Massachusetts.



These stagecoaches used a lot of horses, and those horses ate a lot of hay. Soon Canton farmers were offered a cash market for their surplus hay and a little money began to circulate in the region.

Then someone invented the breast water wheel and made it possible to harness large rivers such as the Farmington. Samuel Collins bought up the old gristmill that stood at the falls at Collinsville and started his axe factory.

The axe factory offered full time jobs at steady wages. Company houses were built around the axe factory and were occupied by people who had no time to farm, make their own clothes, hunt or trap. These people began to buy the things they needed, paying for them out of their wages. They bought salt pork, vegetables and milk from the neighboring farmers — and a little more money began to percolate into the region.

When the Farmington Canal opened down to New Haven, it stimulated traffic on the Albany Turnpike. Lime from Canaan, lumber from Barkhamsted, iron from Cold Spring was hauled down the Turnpike to Avon, where it was loaded into barges and taken down to New Haven. Enterprising New Haven merchants were trading horses, shingles, corn meal and other country products in the West Indies for rum, sugar and molasses. Now that the Canal offered easy transportation, they bought some of these products in the Farmington Valley region. This put a little more cash into circulation.

The axe business grew and flourished and other factories sprang up in Canton. For many years there was a busy powder works on the Nepash River, just before it joined the Farmington. It blew up once or twice, killing a lot of people, but there always seemed to be plenty of others ready to take their places.

Like the Collins axe factory, the powder mill and the other shops put some money into circulation in the form of wages. Also, the Collins Company used a lot of charcoal in its steel tempering operations and kept scores of charcoal burners busy in the hills.

Incidentally, one of the unusual things about the Farmington River region is that most of the trees were cut off for charcoal, rather than for lumber. As far as I have been able to learn, only one log drive ever came down the Farmington. Lambert Hitchcock, when he had his furniture factory in Unionville, bought up a lot of standing timber in Barkhamsted and delivered it to the mill by way of the river. Big log drives were common on many of the other tributaries of the Connecticut, some of them coming down as far as Chicopee as late as 1910.

As an example of how hard people worked in Canton to make a living a century or more ago, take Zenas Dyer, great grandfather of our genial electrical contractor, Thomas C. Dyer.

Zenas Dyer was one of the biggest landowners in this region. He had seven or eight hundred acres. In addition to farming the less rocky stretches of his domain, Zenas ran a busy and popular hostelry, the Dyer Tavern. In addition to this, he distilled his own apple brandy,

butchered his own meat. Also, for many years, he held the road maintenance contract for the Talcott Mountain Turnpike — the stretch between the top of Talcott Mountain and New Hartford — and spent much of his summers working on the road.

In his spare time he hauled coal from Woodford's dock in Avon, on the Farmington Canal, to the Collins Company at the rate of seventy-five cents a ton. I figured that it would take him an average of about two days to haul a ton, so his wages at this work averaged about thirty-eight cents a day, making no allowance for the feeding and upkeep of his yoke of oxen.

When the Canal road first pushed up into this region in 1850, and the Connecticut Western followed in 1871, the first effects of the railroad seemed adverse rather than helpful to the people of the Canton region.

For one thing, it knocked out the Turnpike and killed the market for horses and hay. Also, Col. Hazard did not like to have the railroad trains running so close to his powder works, so he pulled up stakes and moved his powder mills to Hazardville, where they continued to blow up from time to time, until the invention of dynamite and smokeless powder put them out of business.

However, the railroad made it possible to ship farm products to distant city markets. In those days, Hartford, for example, was only a small city and was able to draw its milk supply from the farms that surrounded it. These farmers, however, could not fill Hartford's needs for butter and cheese as well as milk, so soon creameries were established in towns such as Canton, Simsbury and Farmington, where local milk was converted into cheese and butter and these products shipped by train to Hartford, Boston and New York.

The development of the creameries was very important to the back country farmers. For the first time in their lives, many of them began to receive a regular cash income. Also, the creameries would take all the milk they could produce, which gave them an incentive to expand their operations.

New England soil had been cropped for decades without any effort being made to put back some of the fertility that had been mined out of it. As a consequence, some of the fields were so adapted that they could raise little more than devil's paint brush or wild carrots. When the farmers stepped up their herds of cattle to meet the demands of the creameries, they also increased their supply of animal manure. Soon the fields began to benefit from this and the yield per acre of corn or potatoes began to climb.

Another valuable by-product of the creameries was occasioned by the fact that cream needed refrigeration to keep it fresh. The old spring or the well was no longer sufficient. Farmers began to harvest ice to

keep their cream fresh, and they soon learned that it could add to their comfort and convenience in many other ways.

When the mills sprang up at Collinsville, Unionville, Tariffville and other places along the river, the offer of steady work which they held out drew people away from the hill towns. No longer were there enough people left in some of these localities to keep up the church or support the village store. As a consequence, bitter feelings often developed between the hill towns and the mill towns.

When the railroad came through, however, a new industry developed in many of these hill towns — keeping summer boarders. This helped to put a little more money into circulation in regions where money had been mighty scarce.

Another new industry that was created by the railroad, and which lasted until the supply of raw material ran out, was trapping passenger pigeons.

In the eighteen seventies and early eighteen eighties, great clouds of these birds would descend into the woods of Canton each spring and nest here all summer. Lucian Case and John Case were two farmers in the East Hill section of Canton who made a large part of their living by trapping these birds and shipping them into Hartford, where they sold for five or ten cents apiece.

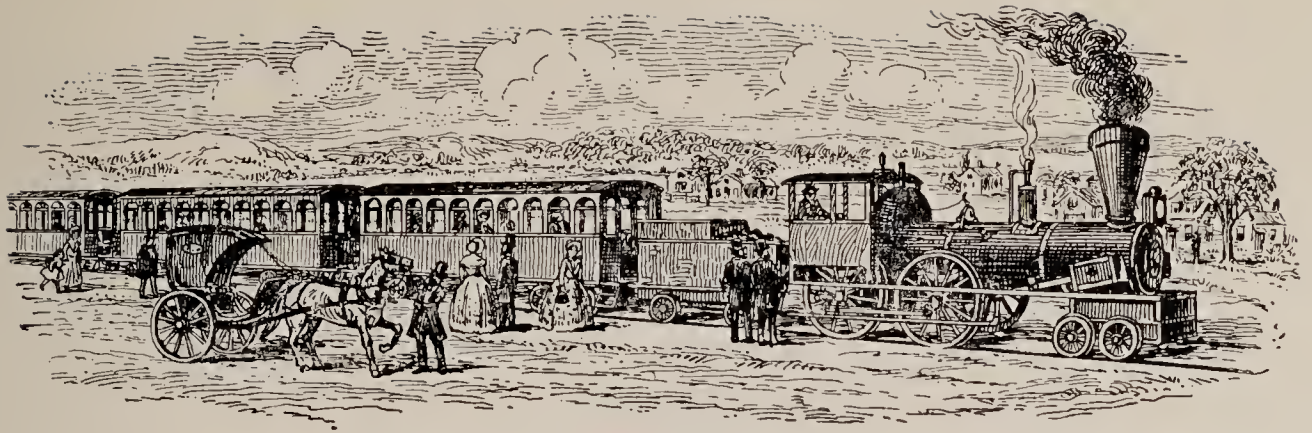
According to Amiel Bahre, who well remembers the passenger pigeons, the last wild pigeons he saw in this region were in the year 1887 — the year before the great blizzard. No one has reported seeing a passenger pigeon for more than fifty years. What happened to them is a great mystery. It is possible that they were wiped out by some disease.



During the past twenty-five years, a revolutionary change has taken place in the way of life around Canton. No longer is the tinkle of the cow bell heard on our hills. The bulldozers of the real estate developers rather than the plowshares of our farmers are now tearing up our fields.

Now a great tide of motor vehicles ebbs out of Canton each morning headed toward Hartford, New Britain and other industrial centers, and floods back into our hills and valleys each evening.

We hope that old industries will continue to flourish and new enterprises and occupations will spring up within the boundaries of Canton for we love our town the way it has been. We like to hear our own shop whistles blow each morning and evening. We want as many of our people as possible to work here as well as to live here for in these modern days your job is your treasure. Where it is, there will your heart be also.



*The Railroad Reached Collinsville in 1850*

## INDUSTRIAL BRIEFS

BY PORTER DOWNEY

Almost without exception, up to the turn of the century and well beyond, the Collins Company was the only Canton industry serving other than nearby markets. Products from the saw mills, grist mills and creameries of the 1800's rarely left Connecticut.

Exceptions include Major Joseph Daily & Sons of Canton who made carriages for the Southern market before the Civil War; Titus and Calvin Case, whose wood-turning mill in Canton Center produced during the same period such varied products as tool handles, coffins, beds, picture frames, barrels and, many years later, a fine-cut tobacco marketed as "Dew Drop." The powder mills, of course, served a wide market but ceased operation after their Civil War bonanza.

None of these industries, however, had as great an impact on the Town of Canton as the Collins Company. The early history and growth of this concern is well documented, and 100 years ago the factory was making and exporting over 150 different patterns of machetes and axes, in addition to supplying axes and other farm tools to the domestic market. With the Collins Company employing over 600 persons, it was inevitable that the village of Collinsville became the population center of Canton. Perhaps just as inevitably, the company became the town's biggest landowner, biggest taxpayer and biggest landlord. More significantly, on the company's business fortunes depended to a large extent the economic welfare of the entire town — not only the factory's own wage earners, but also local merchants, craftsmen and farmers. This situation continued, if in gradually decreasing degrees, right up to World War II and still persists today despite the westward movement of Hartford suburbia into Canton.

With the Collins Company exerting such a powerful influence as employer and landlord, it was natural that the town's population tended to remain static. Sons followed fathers into the factory much as farms

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of the northern sections of the town remained in the same families over the generations. Nestled geographically between the industrial centers of Hartford, New Britain, Bristol, Torrington and Winsted, the town was not dominated by the influence of any one of them until after World War II.

With such an influence, however, the Collins Company inherited a responsibility that went even beyond the normal pattern of industrial paternalism. This responsibility in turn played an important role in shaping the company's postwar plans.

When stepped-up competition dictated major relocation of manufacturing sites, the company took steps to protect the local work force against drastic displacement. In 1949 it purchased the Warren Axe & Tool Co. of Warren, Pa., and moved the axe-making operation to Collinsville. In 1953, it bought the Henry Cheney Hammer Co. of Little Falls, N. Y., and full hammer production is now carried out in Collinsville. The company had not had an easy readjustment in the years immediately following the wartime boom but these acquisitions provided a cushion against serious economic displacement in Collinsville when the company built two foreign plants — in Mexico City and in Sao Paulo, Brazil — in order to serve overseas markets more competitively.

But the Collins Company has by no means been the only industry in the Town of Canton, although admittedly the largest. There were others, several with roots extending well back into the last century.

The record of the Canton creameries indicates clearly the influence of population growth on Canton's dairy industry. Canton creamery was founded by a group of farmers headed by Gaylord Barber in 1878. It was a flourishing business and by 1900 was turning out up to 800 pounds of butter a day.

In 1886 dissatisfaction with pricing arrangements had led one group of farmers to separate from Canton Creamery and set up their own creamery to act as suppliers. This rival creamery, located on Ned's Brook, operated successfully until 1920, when it became more profitable for farmers to sell their milk to large Hartford dairy firms. Four years later, Ned's Brook Creamery was discontinued.

The same price problem confronted the Canton Creamery, which by this time had added a prosperous feed, grain and farm implement business to its operations. By 1918, when the business was incorporated as a farmers' cooperative, its dairy function was primarily as a depot for local farmers to leave their milk for the large city dairies to collect. Even this was discontinued in 1947, but the feed and grain business continues on a reduced scale.

In 1922 Dr. Ralph B. Cox started Cox Shops, a woodworking firm located in the old Canoe Club building near the junction of Rattlesnake Brook and the Farmington River. This firm supplied toys and such

items as door stops to Hartford and New York markets, and, later, axe and hatchet handles for the Collins Company. It was this function that led to its moving into the old Collins Company box shop building. It also made pump handles for Bridgeport Brass Corp., but despite its diverse products, Cox Shops like so many other small industries fell victim to the crash of 1929. Sold to Carson Bros., the firm was moved to Pine Meadow, where it held out until 1934.

Between 1916 and 1924, up to 25 persons, mostly women, were employed at the firm of Traut & Hine on Collins Road, making buckles for the Federal government. Although this business gradually dwindled away, in 1925 Harold Eaton occupied the old buckle works to make reproductions of Colonial hardware.

The Collins Road building burned in 1931, and Mr. Eaton moved his operation to a building on North Street between River and Center Streets in Collinsville. Mr. Eaton was reputed as one of the finest craftsmen in his line, and he served a mail order market, mostly antique dealers, in all sections of the country. He weathered the depression, finally selling his business in 1939.

Following World War II, the old Eaton building was purchased by Raymond Hurley of Winsted. In 1946 the operation was moved to Collinsville and Hurley Manufacturing Co. soon took its place as Canton's second most important employer. The firm greatly expanded the old building and now employs 50 persons making coil and flat springs for manufacturers all over the country, including International Business Machines and General Motors.

The old Eaton building was the site of several other small industries. Edward Eustace, who once worked for Harold Eaton making hardware, now operates a small spun metals business in Canton Center. The building was once a livery stable, a garage, and a bottling works. The bottling works moved to River Road, but fell victim to the wartime sugar shortage of the early 1940's.

Another, larger, bottling works, the Canton Springs Ginger Ale Company, never recovered from the sugar shortage either. This firm was started in 1900 as Gray Rock Beverages, later sold to O'Keefe's Beverages, Ltd., of Toronto, and finally taken over by John Delaney of Canton. Before World War II the business flourished and supplied a wide market with soft drinks of all kinds. It employed up to 35 persons at its most active period, but failed in its struggle to recover markets lost during the war. It finally succumbed in 1954. The property has been purchased and improved by Swift Industries, Inc., Hartford goldbeating firm, but no definite plans have yet been announced.

Several other industries appeared — and disappeared — in the decade following World War II.

Sweet Machine Co., a screw machine firm, operated from 1946-1949 on Old Canton Road near Route 44. It employed 12 women at one time,

but dropped out of sight after trying unsuccessfully to develop an attachment to make any piano a player piano.

In 1950 the building was occupied by the Wolcott Company which had notable success marketing an oven cleaner. It employed up to 15 persons before selling the patent on this product. Then it developed a new shoe polish, but sold the patent on that, too. The building is now occupied by a custom cabinetmaker.

In 1951 the 75-year-old Farmington Valley Herald moved its weekly newspaper offices and plant to a building on Burlington Avenue, and started a commercial printing business. The firm now employs 10 persons.

Also new are Swift Chemical Company on Route 44, employing several persons in the manufacture of industrial chemicals, and Thomas N. Perry Company, an industrial development concern in Canton Center now employing 20 persons.

To further stimulate growth of light industry in Canton, organization of the Canton Development Commission was authorized at a town meeting in 1952. This group has the responsibility of trying to overcome Canton's largely lopsided growth by attracting new industry to the town to balance its rapidly increasing population, thus putting its tax base back on a broader and more equitable basis.

## CHANGES IN TOWN GOVERNMENT

BY ARTHUR W. SWEETON, JR.

### *Some of the Changes in Government during the last Fifty Years*

With our form of government changes can be made from time to time to better cope with the problems arising from our growth in population, and in connection with our ever improving standard of living. These few lines review briefly some of the changes in our local government in the last fifty years.

The cost of town government is a striking example of change, and it is due to many factors. The coming of the auto has created the need for improved hard roads, which are expensive to construct and maintain. Fifty years ago it was common for neighbors in rural areas to turn out and break the roads after a snowstorm. Now four \$6,000 trucks, each with two men to operate, start plowing when the storm begins, and continue night and day until the storm is over. Higher wages, higher prices for equipment, as well as increased services, all add to the higher costs. In 1906 the cost of highways was \$16,080, and \$10,447 was spent for the town schools. In the 1955-6 budget, approximately \$55,000 was allocated for the normal cost of maintenance and new road construction, and \$269,925 for the cost of schools.

For many years the increased cost of local government was met by increased taxes on private property, but more of these costs are now being paid by statewide taxes returned to the town in the form of so called state aid. The 1955-6 budget items referred to above include \$28,000 state aid for highways, and \$67,000 state aid for schools. Canton also received \$48,000 in tuition money from Avon.

Along with the higher budgets and the heavier taxes, there come the need for careful study of the various divisions of the town's finances, and in 1938 the Board of Finance, consisting of six members, was established. This bipartisan board of highly respected and successful citizens of the town takes a second look at the estimated needs for highways, schools, and other items, from the point of view of the taxpayers and the total needs for the whole town. Thus it serves as a stabilizer and helps guide the town finances on an even and sound basis.

Until 1920 there were two voting districts in the town of Canton. The first district included Collinsville, Canton village and vicinity, and the second district, Canton Center and North Canton. With hard roads and autos it became easy for all to come to one voting place with considerable election expense saved. In 1951 a new state law required the town to provide voting machines and the paper ballot was lost in the march of progress.

For many years the town constables were the law enforcement officers of the town. In recent years Canton has shared the services of a resident state policeman with the town of New Hartford. In 1955 through new legislation our town was able to employ the full time services of such an officer. The training, knowledge, and prestige of the State Police, operating with the constables as a team, provide law enforcement services of the highest quality at a very nominal expense.

In 1951 a small claims division was established in our trial justice court. This has been an aid to merchants and others involved in the over extension of credit on small accounts.

In this year, 1956, a new nominating procedure has been provided by the legislature. This is a form of direct primary for selecting political candidates for local and state offices. It should be an aid to good government with full control in the hands of the voters.

Our town is one of the few in this part of the state where local planning and zoning has not been adopted. Three times this matter has been brought before town meeting and rejected, the majority of the voters feeling that the town would be better off without any restrictions. However as our population grows and new problems arise, it is highly probable that the question will again come before town meeting for consideration.

As a whole our town has been fairly free from great controversies over schools and other projects. We can usually talk things over and come to a common understanding on what is best for the interest of the

town for the long run. Many changes have been gradual and beyond any local control and these have been met by energy and foresight. It is well that other changes within the jurisdiction of the local government cannot be made too easily. This is evidenced by the small number and the soundness of the changes made in the last fifty years.

## CANTON CHURCHES

BY LOIS BRISTOL

### *Canton Center Congregational Church*

The first written records of religious services being held in the vicinity of the Canton Center (Church) Parish was in 1746.

The year 1750 started out as a memorable one, for in that year the territory lying "west of the easternmost ledge of the West Mountain" was incorporated by an act of the General Assembly on the second Thursday of May as a district parish and given the name of the First Ecclesiastical Society of West Simsbury.

The first meeting house was built in 1763. There is no record of the size of the early church but it was built on the site of the present one. This building was taken down in 1814 and the present building was erected on the same site.

A hearse house used to stand northwest of the church and in the early days a pound for stray animals was located southwest of the church.

The Rev. Jeremiah Hallock, the fourth minister of the church came as a young man and served the church for over forty years. He married Miss Mercy Humphrey, a daughter of Oliver Humphrey. The house which they occupied was on the site of the present parsonage.

When the town of Canton was formed the Ecclesiastical Society became the First Ecclesiastical Society of Canton and still had charge of church matters.

The Rev. Jarius Burt who succeeded Mr. Halloch served the church thirty-one years. He preached a great deal against the manufacture, sale and use of alcoholic beverages. There were several cider brandy distilleries and many cider mills and it took a man of strong convictions to take such a decided stand. He also believed free masonry was very wrong. This caused a great difference of opinion between him and his people. He also preached very strongly against slavery. He was even asked to either modify his opinions or resign, but he did neither.

In 1874 the church was "modernized", an arched ceiling was put in, the galleries removed and one row of stained glassed windows replaced the two rows of plain windows.

Two day time services were held on Sunday with a "Nooning" between for families to eat their lunch. Around 1877 or 1878 the Ecclesiastical Society of Canton voted to have only one regular service each Sunday.

In 1895 the system of selling the seats in the Church was abolished and the society voted that all seats be free. The money for church expenses being raised by subscription.

During the early 1920's the minister wanted to do away with the Ecclesiastical Society and have the Church incorporated. There was however so much opposition it was not done. However a new set of rules and by-laws were adopted in 1925. These made some changes in Church customs. The name was changed to the Congregational Church of Canton Center.

In May 1953 the Ecclesiastical Society was done away with and the Church incorporated.

Music has always been an important part of the church service. Some of the Choir leaders served for many years. For many years the choir in the gallery facing the pulpit was led instrumentally by a bass viol, violin and flute, an unusual accompaniment to church singing.

The rural community which revolves around the Congregational Church of Canton Center has again begun to grow. Many new families are becoming interested in the church. This little settlement of West Simsbury started back in 1737 still continues to exert its influence upon the town as a whole.

### *Canton Baptist Church*

In the year 1783, a number of persons in West Simsbury now called Canton, separated themselves from the Presbyterian Church and formed a church consisting of thirty members. They called themselves Separates or Strict Congregationists. In the year 1784 the Rev. James Bacon became their first pastor.

After a short period of three years (1787) a dissention took place, and Mr. Bacon and about one half of the church members embraced the Baptist Faith and were baptized.

After Mr. Bacon left the Church remained in a low and declining state for about ten years. There were few meeting and visiting pastors occasionally.

About the year 1802, Elisha Case, 2nd was chosen deacon and Jared Mills was called to public improvement. The Church still remained small and apparently in a luke warm condition as to religious exercises.

A meeting of the Baptist Society was "holden" at the house of Uriah Case on January 1, 1807. A committee was chosen to raise money to build the present building.

According to the record \$798.22 was raised. The building was erected during the year with the different contracts being let and approved. "When said house is covered and ready for use it shall be *improved* for a religious meeting house for the said Baptist Society. It may occasionally be used by any denomination for religious meetings."

The highest subscriptions of one hundred dollars each were given by Jared Mills and Elisha Case, 2nd and ranged from that figure down to fifty cents. There were sixty-seven subscriptions to bring this total to \$798.22. The building was erected on what is now Canton Green.

On September 1, 1838, a meeting of the Baptist Society was held to consider the expediency of repairing or rebuilding the meeting house.

At a meeting in November 1838 a committee of eleven was appointed to remove and replace the house. A piece of land was purchased from Pomeroy Higley at a price of two hundred fifty dollars, one hundred to be his subscription.

The committee contracted to have the building moved for sixty dollars, also a foundation for thirty dollars. It was in that manner that the old church building was moved to its present site.

The steeple holds the original bell installed in 1839. This bell being made by the Makers of the Independence Bell in Philadelphia. It has a good tone and can be heard a long distance on a clear day.

The church steeple is in three graduated sizes with fluted columns to match the large columns below.

This church with its original frame, is the oldest church in town and is a fine example of a typical New England Colonial Church.

### *North Canton Church*

The first Church built in North Canton was known as the "Independent Meeting House". It was built for general religious services about the year 1785.

The "Independent Meeting House" stood on Case Street, across from the House place, at the corner of the old road that led down the hill towards Barkhamsted.

Because religious services were not being held there any more it was decided to sell the building at Auction in 1839. The money to be used to establish a public library.

The main parts of the building were purchased by Decius Humphrey who removed them to Canton to be used to build a silk factory. However the venture failed, and a Mr. Woodruff purchased the building and removed it to Collinsville where it was used to build a house.

After the Meeting House was taken down services were held at the Old Red Schoolhouse until the present church was built in 1871.

The land for this new church was donated by Ruggles Case and Mile Lee. The first service was held April 2, 1872.

The parsonage was purchased in 1875, it was formerly owned by Mile Lee.

The church was remodeled inside in 1955, and under the leadership of Rev. Robert Clark continues to show gain.

Because of financial matters the North Canton pastor also serves the Washington Hill and Pleasant Valley Churches.

### *First Congregational Church*

The First Congregational Church of Collinsville was organized June 25, 1832 with thirty-three members, twenty males and thirteen females. They came from eleven different churches, the largest number from the Canton Center Church. The Rev. H. M. Brinesmeade, who had already made a fine impression on the people of the village, was the first pastor.

There was such a large attendance that it became necessary to provide more room. The land for the new church building was bought from Correl Humphrey in 1826, and the attractive building was erected at the expense of the Collins Company.

The first edifice was dedicated December 21, 1836.

On the night of January 18, 1856, the first church building was destroyed by fire. The weather was very cold, high winds and snow was falling. The near by buildings were saved by throwing snow upon them.

The edifice was immediately replaced by the present building which was dedicated to the "Worship of Almighty God", on the evening of February 25, 1858. The people raised two thousand dollars, the Collins Company six thousand and Mr. Samuel W. Collins one thousand.

The first organization of the church was by the dual method; the First Ecclesiastical Society of Collinsville, Conn. members of which would consist of people not members of the Church and the Congregational Church organization. This dual method continued up to and during the pastorate of Rev. Charles Tracy (1920-1925) who was active in having the church incorporated as the First Congregational Church of Collinsville.

In 1921 the Standing Committee recommended that the sale of seats in support of the Church and Society be discontinued. That the Church adopt the "Every Member Canvass" as a means of defraying expenses of the Church and all seats be made free to the congregation. This system has been continued.

In January 1925 at the annual meeting of the church it was voted to accept as a gift from the Collins Company a warranty deed to the Church and parsonage. The following resolution was passed, "Resolved

that the First Congregational Church in Collinsville extend to the stockholders and directors of the Collins Company their sincere thanks for their Act in transferring the title of the Church property to the hands of the Church and will endeavor in the future as in the past to maintain a place for public worship and social activities for the community.”

In the year 1871 it was voted to allow the women of the church to have a voice in the affairs of the church. Also during this year it was voted to unite with the Farmington Valley Conference instead of remaining in the Hartford Central Conference.

The subject of temperance is expressly mentioned in the records of the first twenty years. Very strong resolutions declared, “that the use, manufacture and sale of ardent spirits as a drink is an immorality.”

During the pastorate of the Rev. Gordon Bailey the Ladies Aid Society was formed. It proved to be a great help in the work of the church. When the terrible epidemic of influenza occurred the Chapel of the Church was used as an emergency hospital.

The Church is steadily growing under the active leadership of Rev. Alfred Bradford who has been pastor for ten years.

### *St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Church*

On the 22nd day of August, 1852, the first church dedicated to St. Patrick was erected in the Farmington Valley. It served an area that today has seven Catholic Churches.

Located in the Canton section of Collinsville, it had many illustrious pastors down the years, but as the parishioners increased, and urged on by a disastrous fire in 1925, the Reverend James J. Smith, started to erect a finer and sturdier church in the year 1933.

To accommodate the new structure, the site was moved a little to the north, and in the year 1936 the present stone church was finished. It has been called the most beautiful country church in the United States.

The stone came from a quarry in Glastonbury, and the interior arches of the cloister, were hewn out from larger beams that were gathered from old structures in the neighborhood. Thus the old was blended with the new, and the years past added to the beauty of the present.

At the time of the celebration of the first Mass in Collinsville the Catholic population was twelve. Today, under the present pastor, the Reverend John J. Sullivan, there are 508 families and a Catholic population of 1812.

### *Trinity Episcopal Church*

Trinity Episcopal Church began with a small group who held their first Episcopal services in the Old Fire House, on January 29, 1854.

In 1875, the Rev. Mr. Breed successfully organized the Church people into the organization soon to be known as Trinity Parish.

The Parish was received into the Diocese June 8, 1875 and the corner stone laid, November 11, 1875.

The Church was built by gifts from the Congregation on the lot on Maple Avenue, the gift of Mr. John E. Wheelock.

In 1905 the new Rectory was built on Thayer Avenue. This was made possible by the bequest of \$3,603.76 from Miss Helena R. Case.

The lot north of the Church was purchased in 1908, this included a building which was used as a parish house until 1946.

The past few years have seen a rapid growth of Trinity Episcopal Church, with the community steadily growing and many of the new families becoming members of the Parish.

### *St. Matthew's Lutheran Church*

The German Lutheran Church was founded November 19, 1884 by the Rev. Edward Hauter, field missionary organizer.

The first meeting were held in Collin's Hall, and later in Grange Hall.

The present edifice on Torrington Avenue was dedicated on February 18, 1894.

For the first fifty years the German language was used in worship and instruction.

Instruction in German was given free to children of the Congregation every Saturday. Anyone else who wished to have the same instruction could do so by paying fifty cents per month.

For over a full generation now the native tongue has been replaced by English.

During 1955 the 70th year of organization was observed. At that time the church was beautifully redecorated.

The Rev. Clifford E. Butterer is the present pastor of the Congregation which numbers over two hundred.

### *The Swedish Pilgrim Church*

The Swedish Pilgrim Church was organized April 28, 1887 by Mr. and Mrs. J. B. Johnson, who felt the need of "Christian Fellowship in their language."

Meetings were held at first in the houses of members but later in the Fireman's Hall.

The new Church was built in 1893 and the first meeting was held on March 19, 1893. The cost of the building was \$4,000, and \$2,700 of this money was in the hands of the treasurer before the building was finished.

The first settled pastor was Rev. Edward Pohl who stayed four years.

At one time the church had an active membership of seventy and a Sunday School of one hundred thirty-six.

As time has gone by some of the younger members have moved away and not many have come to take their places. Of the twenty-four original members only four remain.

During the sixty-eight years of the church there have been ten ministers. The present minister Rev. C. E. Peterson has been serving the church for fourteen years.

## FIFTY YEARS OF PROGRESS AND EXPANSION IN EDUCATION

BY ADELBERT BOWDOIN

This history concerns itself, first of all, with a half century of Progress in the Canton Public School System. The word Progress is therefore our theme throughout this historical sketch. Research in the annual reports to the town of the Board of Education and the reports of the State Supervisors, who served over the years, furnish ample proof that no decade of this interesting era was without definite improvements, as well as gratifying advancements. There was no long standing static conditions as the years passed. Opposition to these conditions became strong and finally masterful.

The school year 1905-1906 seems to be our starting point. Just previous to that date town consolidation of schools was realized and the school officials had made arrangements with the State Board of Education for State supervision of schools. This era of State supervision continued until 1953 when Mr. Hiemwarth Jestin then principal of the high school became our first full time Superintendent of Public Schools.

Just now we need to make clear the central position of control both past and present, of the Board of Education in the over all administration of a public school system. The General Assembly of the State of Connecticut has, by special legislation granted to the Boards of Education of the several towns all powers essential for adequate administration of all public schools.

Under the District system the term School Committee was commonly used but, later under consolidation the School Board was the term of expression, and finally in the nineteen thirties the term Board of Education became official everywhere in Connecticut.

Its membership varied with the different towns but in Canton from the beginning has consisted of nine members with all major sections of the town having representation. The members of the Board elected a

chairman and a secretary who in general have served for many years therefore increasing the efficiency of the service. All members serve without pay. The members of the Board are organized into committees who administrate its activities under the direction of the chairman. With the recent rapid growth of our school system this organization is most efficient. Those that have served on the Board for many years, as most of them have, merit unlimited praise for their heroic efforts to give the children of the town the very best that education affords.

Second only to the Board of Education was the school supervisor. He was an apointee of the State Board of Education and the agent of the local board. In brief his main tasks were to recommend teachers; to visit schools frequently when in session; to observe the effectiveness of the teaching; to suggest new methods of instruction, and to evaluate all results observed in schools and classrooms. All this was reported to the Board with comments and recommendations for its consideration. So many achievements crowned the efforts of our supervision that the long period — forty-seven years — of their service to this town should rightly be called the Period of Expansion and Progress under State Supervision. We shall have many occasions to mention their services in the unfolding of this history.

Our building expansion began in 1908 when the Spring Street School had a face-lifting by the addition of a second story thereby doubling the number of classrooms and relieving a very conjested condition in the primary grades. The last school building of wooden frame construction was ready for occupancy in 1915, and was commonly called the Collinsville Grammar School. It contained four spacious classrooms and a fine basement. Mr. M. Stanley Neal was Chairman of the Building Committee and the complete cost was \$7,500. Mrs. Louise MacMasters for many years was the efficient teacher of the eighth grade and a very resourceful principal of the Collinsville Grammar School.

1908-1909 was a good year for the high school near the Green. Mr. Seth Haley, a graduate of Bowdoin College, became principal for a period of seven years. Mr. Haley was young, well educated for teaching and equally well endowed personally for the work of a high school principal. His tenure of office was the longest of any principal from Professor Flint to 1924. His work here made a lasting impression on the students and on this area near and far. With Mr. Haley the annual trip of the senior class to Washington had its beginnings.

The several state supervisors previous to 1919 seemed to be activated universally by such pressing needs as overcrowding in the schools, vocational courses in the high school, too few teachers in the high school, free textbooks for all students both grade and high schools, transportation and many other things. Some of these needs were corrected without too much effort after exasperating delays; but overcrowding in the lower grades should require special explanation.

For a long time the first and second grades at Collinsville were taught by two teachers in one room with a total registration for some years approaching one hundred. About the time this history begins two rooms were provided for these grades. The first grade continued to be overcrowded with children whose ages ranged from four to ten years, many of whom were from limited English speaking homes. To add to the teacher's difficulties, children were allowed to begin school at various times during the year and often by April it was necessary to hire an extra teacher to handle the influx of new pupils. Several suggestions to correct this situation were offered but no permanent solution came about at this time.

The calendar year 1919-1920 brought the dynamic William M. Strong to Canton for the work of school supervisor. Mr. and Mrs. Strong became residents of Collinsville and entered into the life of the community with a whole heart.

All conditions that needed study in our schools were carefully and thoroughly investigated and the findings presented to the Board of Education with definite comments, suggestions and recommendations for action. The Board cooperated in as far as their financial resources permitted.

The accomplishments of his supervision can be stated as follows:

Transportation of high school pupils was approved by vote of the town and immediately made available.

The Commercial Course was introduced: the necessary equipment purchased and two teachers added to the high school faculty.

Several thousand dollars were spent in the general modernization of all schools including correction of heating and lighting conditions.

The North Canton School was moved across the road from its dangerous and undesirable location in the work of the road at the corner of Barkhamsted Road and Case Street.

Free textbooks and supplies were furnished to all pupils.

Children beginning school were to enter the first grade only in September; the entrance age became six years and the Collinsville first grade was divided into two classes for a few years to relieve the long time overcrowding in that room.

The necessity for a new high school was strongly impressed on the minds of the voters and limited efforts made towards obtaining a suitable site for the building.

Mr. Victor Viering was Chairman of the Board of Education during the period of these splendid achievements. He was interested in every phase of education that needed improvement.

The author of this history, after an interview with Supervisor Strong at Harvard Summer School, came to Collinsville in July 1924; met Chairman Victor Viering and other members of the Board of Edu-

cation in a special meeting. The meeting with the Board resulted in a contract to become principal of Collinsville High School, beginning a term of office continuing for eleven years at Collinsville and thirteen years at Canton High School.

The condition of the high school building was deplorable; many of the citizens were indifferent and not a few regarded the whole high school situation as practically hopeless. In contrast to this gloomy outlook, I found the student body was above the average in scholastic attainments and initiative. The Senior Class left nothing to be desired in cooperation. I have always had most kindly feelings toward them individually and as a group.

Mr. Strong was transferred to another supervisory district in the summer of 1927 and Mr. F. J. Penley of Winsted, a supervisor of experience in rural education became our state supervising agent. During his supervision Canton High School, Cherry Brook School and the Canton Elementary School were planned and constructed.

In Mr. Penley's first report to the Canton School Board, he continued the agitation for a new high school by raising the question, "What does the community want to do about the Collinsville High School Building?" Enough public interest was kindled the following year — 1929 — to bring about the appointment of two different high school site committees. These plans for a new high school building resulted only in a preference vote for the Arnold lot with all other high school construction plans laid on the table. Later in the year the free use of the Town Hall for High School athletics was approved at a town meeting.

In the early months of 1933 rumors were in circulation locally that subsidies were being granted to communities to assist in the construction of public school buildings. Action to this end was taken at the annual town meeting October 2 when a site investigating committee was appointed to report at an adjourned town meeting on October 16. On this date the meeting expressed a preference for the Arnold lot by a large majority. The meeting further requested the selectmen to issue a call for a special town meeting "the purpose of which will be to issue bonds not to exceed \$100,000."

The all important meeting was held on November 22, 1933 and briefly stated action was taken as follows:

1. That the sum of \$100,000 is hereby appropriated for the purchase of a site and for construction of a new high school building thereon, and the furnishing and equipping of the same.
2. That the Town of Canton purchase, at a cost not to exceed \$2,000 a piece of land known as the Arnold lot.
3. That the building committee shall consist of all members of the Board of Education and three additional members, Mr. Lee Kelley, Mr. Victor Viering and Mr. Geo. B. Moroney.

The morning after the Big Town Meeting the principal was met at the entrance of the high school by self-appointed group of eager girls with a background of boys looking on. They requested a celebration at once. This demand was irresistible and soon after a procession was being formed by classes of students young and old, headed by Selectman Lee Kelley and Principal Bowdoin sporting donated silk hats and canes and with the band leading marched the mile distance to the Arnold lot. Along the way cameras clicked, mothers and children lined the highway with a great display of enthusiasm. At the new site speeches were made with the Rev. G. A. Downey, a veteran teacher and a tireless promoter of the new prospect, the principal orator.

The high school building committee selected Mr. Frank Wilder, already Chairman of the Board of Education, for its chairman, but there were many legal obstacles and much red tape and official hesitation before the final agreement with the Federal authorities for a subsidy was documented. Some citizens grew impatient and said "I will believe that we are going to get a new high school when I see it". However all financial difficulties were solved at a town meeting June 1, 1934, an architect selected, and a contract was awarded, in late August "the dirt began to fly". The building was so nearly completed in the spring of 1935 that the dedication exercises were held during the April vacation and classes were in session there on the Monday following vacation, the class of 1935 being the first to graduate from the Canton High School.

A modern public school building makes possible better health conditions for the students, noon lunches, rooms for character building activities and more opportunities for social contacts with the public in general. The new Canton High School building made it possible for the Board of Education to add three new departments to our previously limited curriculum — household arts, industrial arts and physical education. Physical education periods, including sports, became part of the regularly-scheduled periods and coaching for the athletic teams was raised to a high standard. Biology became a new course in the academic department and the courses in Physics, Chemistry and General Science were broadened consistent with the new laboratory facilities and equipment. With a strong background in science and mathematics, not a few graduates of the school had a high degree of success in the armed services, many of them being selected for training as commissioned and non-commissioned officers soon after entrance in the service. From a small school, a relative large percentage of our graduates became officers in the flying corps.

Around two hundred students transferred to the new high school building and the first graduating class had thirty-four members. A few years later during World War II, the registration was two hundred ninety-three, the largest graduating class fifty-eight and the faculty had increased to fourteen. One reason for the increased registration and graduates was the additional tuition students from Avon. Through

the following years, Supervisors Penley and Jestin and Chairman Warren Horton planned with the Avon school authorities for the education of their tuition students until their construction program would be able to accommodate all the Avon secondary students. In the meanwhile, no more Burlington high school students were admitted.



A long felt desire for a new building to replace the antiquated one room schools in the northern part of the town became much in evidence in the late thirties. These buildings were becoming overcrowded and were no longer giving satisfactory service. At a very well attended town meeting in June 1941, which was hurriedly transferred from the upper town hall to the high school auditorium, the new building was approved with little effective opposition. An eleven acre site was purchased along Cherry Brook and construction of the building which had four rooms and an auditorium, was completed early in 1942. Mrs. Agnes King, an experienced and efficient upper grade teacher, became principal of the new Cherry Brook School, a position which she held until she transferred to the Canton Junior High School in September 1954. All the outside schools were closed, but within a short time, due to the overcrowded conditions in the Collinsville Grade Schools, it was necessary to reopen the Canton Street School. The War stopped all further school construction for several years. The pressure of a rapidly increasing school population made it necessary in 1951 to add four rooms to the Cherry Brook School, remodel the auditorium and build a new kitchen.

As the war drew to a close the parents of children living in Collinsville and Canton Street, dissatisfied with overcrowded classrooms, double sessions and old buildings, began a vigorous campaign for a new building. The building was approved by a series of town meetings in

the fall of 1945 and a site purchased on Dyer Avenue. After many exasperating delays, mostly caused by building restrictions, a town meeting in the spring of 1948 approved the final plans and construction was started. The Canton Elementary School opened early in 1949 with Mrs. Sally Parsons, the capable and experienced principal of the Collinsville Grammar School in charge and the three old buildings were closed permanently. Mrs. Parsons retired from the Canton school system in June 1955 after more than twenty-four years of service. This building which has twelve rooms and an auditorium, was filled to capacity within two years.



In 1949 the Board of Education formed a Long Range Planning Committee to study all aspects of the increasing school population. A three year study of local conditions was undertaken by the committee. By 1952, they were able to report that it would be necessary to build in the near future, either a third elementary school or to expand the high school building so that it could operate as a six year school. The plan for the high school addition seemed to be the most feasible and economical for the town. At town meetings in April and June 1953, the recommendations of the Long Range Planning Committee for the expansion of the high school building were approved and the necessary funds appropriated for the first phase, an eleven room addition including new commercial rooms and science laboratories.

Additional land was purchased and construction started in February 1954 and the new classroom space was available for use the following September. The Senior High School occupied the new section and the older part became the Junior High School. The Canton school sys-

tem was now on a six-three-three basis and had sufficient classroom space both at the elementary and secondary levels to accommodate the increasing school population for the next few years.

A teacher of music whose salary was paid from public school funds, was giving instruction in our schools as early as 1900 and this program has continued down to the present day without break. Miss Elsie Longan became music teacher in 1914 and her connection with the Canton school system continued until she recently retired. Her courses in music were well organized and thorough with emphasis on musical appreciation and expression. She received many commendations from the public for the many excellent operettas, concerts and graduation programs that were presented under her supervision. In the early years, the Town Hall was used for these efforts and later, the auditoriums of the new school buildings became the scenes of numerous musical activities. An immediate increase in glee club and orchestral instruction took place as soon as the new high school auditorium was available, and became almost as common as the classroom instruction in the various subjects. The school auditoriums have added much to the development of the musical and dramatic abilities of the pupils and have been available to the public for similar activities.

Standard mental tests were first given to high school and elementary pupils during the administration of Mr. Strong. During the supervision of Mr. Penley, the program was gradually increased. With the cooperation of the State Department of Education, reading tests were given and the results of these and the mental tests were carefully evaluated. During the late thirties, the high school in cooperation with the University of Connecticut introduced a program consisting of various types of mental, achievement and aptitude tests. These tests were scored by machines at the University and returned to the school for interpretation. In addition to the school having a comprehensive record of the aptitudes and achievements of each student, these tests gave the students the opportunity to become familiar with the various types of standard tests before taking college entrance examinations, armed services and employment aptitude tests. During the principalship of Mr. Joseph Doherty, special attention was given to reading tests and in the high school special groups were organized for students with reading problems. The testing program in the high school was taken over by a guidance director and under the administration of Dr. Jestin has been greatly expanded covering all pupils from grade one through high school.

In the early years of the century, there was an organization in Collinsville called the Woman's Alert Club. This group of community spirited women had as one of their chief objectives, the improvement of the schools and the welfare of the local children. The advancements and improvements in the standards of the schools in their times was, most often, due to their tireless efforts. From the time this group ceased its

activities to the early forties, there seemed to be no organized group which concerned itself with the welfare of the schools. In the spring of 1942, an organization was formed at the Cherry Brook School which became the Mother's Club. Its first project was the successful introduction of the cafeteria program at that school. The Canton Parent-Teacher Association was organized in the fall of 1945 and had soon raised funds for a sound movie projector for the high school. They introduced a cafeteria program in the new elementary school. These two groups have organized the libraries in the elementary schools, improved the high school library, purchased an audiometer, sponsored yearly physical examinations for all pupils and purchased much needed special equipment. At their meetings, they have had special programs and speakers on subjects relating to the welfare, problems and education of children. They, also, have cooperated in many worth-while community activities.

The classroom with a skilled teacher is the heart and center of a public school system. What happens there under the guidance of a wise teacher, determines the mental development of the child from the first grade through high school and beyond. For many years, Canton has been and now is most fortunate in its teachers. These were found in the lone one room schools in the rural area and in the crowded grade and high school rooms. They taught successfully under great handicaps. They dropped out of the profession or continued it in larger communities that offered greater rewards and possibly, less hardship. It seems to me quite permissible to mention two of our life-time career teachers. These two veteran teachers of the Sesqui-Period, devoted their last working years to teaching. Mrs. Laura T. Neal had the unique distinction of being a teacher in the Collinsville High School, superintendent of schools part of one year, member of the Canton Board of Education and head of the English department in Canton High School. Mrs. Anna B. Jahn taught in the Canton elementary schools for a period of nearly thirty-five years and is now living in retirement in Canton.

At this time, we pause to salute and do honor to all the faithful teachers who taught during the Sesqui-Period; and those, also, who are still serving so well in our school system. May they have as much satisfaction from their work as I received from my forty-two years of public school service.

## CANTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

BY LOIS W. PELCZAR

A meeting was held in the Collinsville High School on April 16, 1913 to ascertain the sentiment of the community in regard to the starting of a public library in Collinsville.

Principal Seth G. Haley of the Collinsville High School served as chairman. He explained that it would take many years to accumulate enough money to erect and equip a library building. He felt that a

beginning could be made by securing a room and enough money raised by popular subscription to purchase books.

President William Hill of the Collins Co. offered the use of the basement of the Collins Co. at a nominal rental.

The State Board of Education had assured Mr. Haley of a grant of \$200.00 if the townspeople also did their share.

There were sixty-one people present at this meeting. They voted unanimously in favor of having a public library.

Within a week another meeting was held. \$750.00 was reported as contributed. Two recommendations were made:

1. That the organization be incorporated under the corporate name of "Canton Public Library, Incorporated."
2. That the purpose be "To create and maintain a free public circulating library in the Town of Canton, to acquire lands, buildings and appurtenances as necessary for the use of same."

The library was opened to the public on November 8, 1913 with 650 books on the shelves. Reference books comprised a dictionary, an encyclopedia and reference books in history.

The first librarian was Miss Lucia Derrin engaged at a salary not to exceed \$150.00 per year.

The first appropriation from the Town of Canton was \$200.00. This has been increased gradually to the present appropriation of \$1,750.00 per year.

Under the careful guidance of the Governing Board the library grew. We were fortunate in having an interested benefactor — a Mrs. Helen R. Collins who underwrote the cost of a building of our own.

On November 11, 1920 formal dedication exercises were held for the new library building. This building called the Collins Memorial Library was presented by Mrs. Collins as a memorial to her husband, Mr. Howard Collins, and to the soldiers and sailors of the Town of Canton. Mr. Collins was the son of Mr. Samuel Collins, founder of the Collins Co. The land was presented to the Canton Soldiers Memorial Association by Mr. Jasper H. Bidwell. This association made the land available for the erection of a library building. A drive was conducted among the townspeople for funds to equip the new building. On December 11, 1920 the library was opened for circulation and records show that 242 books were issued that day.

In 1929 the conversion of the basement as a children's room was considered but the plan was discarded as not practical. Twenty-five years later the need for more room again brought the basement under consideration. Modern construction now made it a practical plan and the association is very proud of the children's room in the library base-

ment. At a cost of approximately \$2,000.00 an attractive, well-lighted, well-heated and well-ventilated room has been created.

The building has been kept in good repair and decoration and is one of the points of interest of our town.

It is interesting to note that the library has maintained a schedule of at least two afternoons and evenings a week with the exception of being closed eleven days in 1951 for repairs, for an occasional severe storm and for the influenza epidemic at which time the books were all fumigated. There are now 13,200 volumes in the library. The encyclopedias and other reference books are up-to-date. Current fiction and non-fiction are purchased regularly. The most complete Webster's Dictionary is available for use at the library.

Many well-known and respected person's names appear on the records of the association. Thru forty-three years these individuals have given freely of their time and talents to make The Canton Public Library a vital part of the community.

## THE FLOOD OF 1955

BY ANNE N. LYNCH

*From reports compiled by Problems of Democracy Class  
of Canton High School*

Connecticut has witnessed one hundred and ninety-three floods since March, 1639 to October, 1955. Among these floods the most severe were the 1936 and 1938 floods and the two 1955 floods.

The flood of March, 1936 was due to a spring thaw. Rushing ice and water caused many jams and much damage to roads, bridges and buildings. The only damage to Collinsville was the boiler room at the Collins Company. The stage height was 6 feet above the boiler room floor.

The September, 1938 flood was more disastrous and was caused by high winds and heavy rainfall. Many houses on River Road were flooded up to the first floor. The Collins Company boiler room was again flooded and the bridge near the Collins Company was greatly weakened. Eight days passed before all electric and telephone lines were restored. The water reached a height of 9'8" above the boiler room floor.

The Farmington River rises in the town of Beckett, Massachusetts at an elevation of 1,800 feet. The river flows southward for forty-five miles until it reaches Farmington where it makes an abrupt turn to the north and then runs gradually northeastward until it joins the Connecticut River at Windsor. The total length is 78 miles.

Collinsville is at the base of the Farmington River watershed. Precipitation from this watershed land percolates down the hills to the water table. Within the saturation zone below the water table, it moves





slowly to places of discharge, where it may emerge as a spring or seep into the bed of a stream and become stream flow. This discharge of ground water maintains the flow of streams when there is no direct surface runoff during a dry period.

On August 18, 1955, the rain began to fall in the morning and continued intermittently all day. At 11:00 that night, the rain began in earnest and fell at the rate of  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch per hour until 11:00 August 19th. A hurricane had been the direct cause of the rainfall and in some parts of the Farmington River Watershed as much as 16 inches fell. Collinsville received about 14 inches of rain.

On August 19th, the Farmington River crested at Collinsville at 24 feet above the boiler room at the Collins Company. Before this time, however, the damage had already been wrought. Eight homes and four businesses had been completely demolished on River Road. Fourteen families had been evacuated from their homes during the night. Three homes had been demolished on Powder Mill Road with three families having been evacuated, some by helicopter. Sixty-three other families in Canton had left their homes and were unable to return until the water receded and the endless job of drying out could be accomplished. This work was aided by the fact that the days immediately following the flood were bright, sunny and very hot.

The iron bridge at the Collins Company went out at 6:00 A.M. Friday morning. The upper town bridge had been dangerously weakened by water tearing at its supports. For the next few days the only way to get back and forth across the river was by foot on the lower railroad bridge. Canton was isolated. Even after the water went down along Route 44 near Indian Hill, it was only possible to go as far as Satan's Kingdom. Access to Hartford was impossible as the road was flooded partially at the Canton Golf Course and was very badly torn up just beyond Avon. No matter where one turned, all the roads were rendered impassable by numerous streams and brooks which had overflowed their banks and had become, temporarily, raging torrents.

Previous to the flood, Canton's electrical power had its source at Unionville. The plant was demolished during the flood and even though power crews worked feverishly, it was several days before electricity was restored. Communications were in a similar state but telephone facilities were installed by crews from all over the state. Prior to this, an emergency line between the east and the west banks of the river, where the line had gone out with the bridge, had been installed. Dry ice and generators were at a premium as freezer owners frantically tried to save many pounds of frozen foods.

Canteens had quickly been established at the Redmen's Hall and the Lutheran Church on Torrington Avenue. Foodstuffs that could not be obtained in town were flown in by helicopters which landed at the high school field, in front of the Collins Company, or directly across the

river. The townspeople quickly became used to hearing the low drone of the helicopters as these versatile birds became the lifeline of more badly hit towns such as Winsted and Torrington.

The Canton Civil Defense set up headquarters in the Town Hall where clothing was issued, the National Guard received their orders and the people could obtain information about the flood. The Civil Defense supplied temporary housing, medical assistance and food, and rationed gasoline (this last was necessary because lack of electricity had rendered service pumps temporarily useless and also no one was sure when the town could obtain more gasoline). Guards were posted along both sides of the river 24 hours a day to prevent looting.

A Civil Defense worker was posted with the National Guardsmen at strategic points in the town to prevent people without specific business from entering and to discourage sightseers. A curfew of 9:00 P.M. was enforced to alleviate confusion in the darkness which pervaded the town because of lack of electricity. Canton was not under martial law at any time. The National Guard was requested by and under the supervision of the Canton Civil Defense.

After the water had gone down, the enormous job of digging out and cleaning up faced the town. One of the most immediate problems was a badly needed bridge to replace the one lost at the Collins Company. The supports of the town bridge had been strengthened and traffic was proceeding across it, but the bridge was not satisfactory for large amounts of traffic, making it necessary to replace the washed-out bridge immediately.

The work of installing a portable 260 foot Bailey Bridge, which allows one-way traffic, was begun August 27th and completed September 10th. The State Highway Department paid the \$30,000 cost.

The total expense to the town for payment of police and temporary work on roads and bridges was \$22,845. The State and Federal governments reimbursed the town for \$19,995, leaving a net cost of \$2,849.

The state trucks had been damaged and the town trucks, which had been flooded, were covered by a comprehensive insurance policy which insured them against rising water. Automobiles could have been insured, but flood insurance for homes and businesses, for the most part, was unattainable.

Red Cross case workers interviewed effected families and provided them with new homes if their savings plus their earnings were not sufficient to buy them. In certain cases, the Red Cross also paid for rebuilding damaged homes and replacing flooded utilities.

\$1,885 was collected in Canton during the flood and Red Cross aid to Canton was \$131,000.

The various fire departments of Canton serviced the community by washing down and decontaminating effected areas and pumping cellars flooded by supersaturation of the ground. A total of 6,695 typhoid shots were administered in Canton during the flood. No typhoid cases were reported. Three buildings were condemned. Drinking water was carefully checked each day and all possible sanitary precautions were taken to guard against disease.

A list of known damage in Canton follows :

|                                                                            |    |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Houses demolished .....                                                    | 22 |
| River Road .....                                                           | 8  |
| Powder Mill Road .....                                                     | 3  |
| Arch Street (Burlington) .....                                             | 11 |
| Families who left their homes .....                                        | 84 |
| River Road .....                                                           | 14 |
| North Street .....                                                         | 7  |
| Center Street .....                                                        | 3  |
| Maple Avenue .....                                                         | 17 |
| Dyer Avenue .....                                                          | 3  |
| Collins Road .....                                                         | 6  |
| Burlington Avenue .....                                                    | 3  |
| Powder Mill Road .....                                                     | 3  |
| Indian Hill .....                                                          | 2  |
| Arch Street (Burlington) .....                                             | 26 |
| Businesses and public buildings — Damaged and/or rendered inoperable ..... | 18 |
| River Road .....                                                           | 4  |
| River Street .....                                                         | 2  |
| New Street .....                                                           | 3  |
| Bridge Street .....                                                        | 2  |
| Maple Avenue .....                                                         | 1  |
| Burlington Avenue .....                                                    | 4  |
| Indian Hill .....                                                          | 1  |
| Front Street (Collins Company) .....                                       | 1  |

Canton had been through the worst flood in its history. It had survived, but the foremost questions in most people’s minds were those concerning an effective warning system and a flood control plan.

Canton was made part of an elaborate warning system that included most of New England and action was pending by the Federal and State governments on bills advocating flood control and prevention.

The Army Engineers helped to clean up the debris left by the flood and made an extensive survey of the river. They then made recommendations to the town concerning flood control measures.











PHOEBE HUMPHREY HOUSE

## SECTION II

*Dedicated to*  
PHOEBE HUMPHREY CHAPTER  
DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION  
COLLINSVILLE, CONNECTICUT

*Compiled by*  
PAST REGENTS CLUB  
OF  
PHOEBE HUMPHREY CHAPTER  
DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION  
COLLINSVILLE, CONNECTICUT

1928 Mrs. Louis U. Barnes  
1932 Mrs. Carl F. Svenson  
1936 Mrs. Howard A. Bristol  
1938 Mrs. Arthur W. Sweeton, Jr.  
1942 Mrs. George A. Latimer  
1944 Mrs. Russell H. Rand  
1946 Mrs. Stuart A. Bristol  
1950 Mrs. J. Wesson Phelps  
1952 Mrs. Albert H. Viering  
1954 Mrs. William G. Adams

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*Edited by*  
SARA LOUGEE LATIMER  
1956



# CANTON

Facts and Fancies

of its

Oldest Houses

with a

Brief Resume

of its

Oldest Churches and Schools

# Alphabetical List of House Occupants

## A

Adams, William  
Alderman, Helen (Collins Co.)  
Allen, Mrs. Charles  
Allen, Delbert L.  
Allyn, Harold  
Anderson, Elmer  
Angell, Rev. Russell E.  
Arnold, Joseph  
Augur, James E.

## B

Bahre, Charles  
Baker, Dr. George  
Baldwin, Lucian E.  
Barker, Dr. Norman J.  
Barraclough, James  
Beckwith, William  
Beckwith, William H.  
Berg, Edward  
Bidwell, Mrs. Albert F.  
Bidwell, Thomas  
Bierut, Adolph  
Bill, Roswell W.  
Bissell, William  
Blackman, Elmer B.  
Blanchard, John  
Bradley, Lester and Hazel  
Braislin, John C.  
Bristol, Anson W., Jr.  
Bristol, E. Raymond  
Bristol, Herman  
Bristol, Mortimer R.  
Bristol, Mrs. Roscoe  
Bristol, Sterling  
Brown, David  
Butler, Harold  
Butler, John

## C

Cables, Alfred  
Canton Inn  
Case, Amos (site)  
Case, Alice L.  
Case, Gordon  
Case, Herman  
Case, Lewis, Jr.  
Case, Ruth E.  
Chapin, Henry  
Chapin, Kenneth  
Collins Company Office  
Collins Company Tenements  
Congregational Church Parsonage  
Comeau, Clifford  
Conklin, Allen  
Conklin, B. E.  
Conlin, Gay  
Cowles, F. Morgan  
Cox, Frank  
Cox, Dr. Ralph  
Craig, Mrs. Charlotte G.  
Craig, Robert W.  
Crippen, E. H.

Crittenden, Mrs. Butler P.  
Crowley, Carroll  
Crowley, Lisle  
Curry, Arthur (Collins Co.)  
Cyr, Arthur

## D

Daniels, Leo  
Davis, Guy  
Davis, Hewat  
Demski, Theodore  
Dionne, Eugene  
Dodge, Gail  
Donaldson, Mrs. Stanley  
Dowd, Ralph  
Downey Family (Collins Co.)  
Driggs, Amos  
Dubay, Joseph (Martin Rioux)  
Durkin, Joseph  
Dyer, Margaret

## E

Eaton Block  
Eaton, Everett B.  
Eaton, Everett P.  
Eddy, Dr. G. W. (Tenants)  
Edgerton, Howard (see H. Davis)  
Ehrhardt, Louis H.  
Elliott, William F.  
Engine House (Collins Co.)  
Erickson, Harold

## F

Fielden, Lee C.  
Fish, Alton  
Fletcher, John (Collins Co.)  
Folley, Edward  
Forker, Lewellyn P.  
Fox, Clarence (see R. B. Stevens)  
French Blocks (Collins Co.)

## G

Gerath, Joseph  
Gillespie, Stuart P.  
Gillette, Kent B.  
Goodhue, Emily and Irene  
Gracy, Ruth V.  
Graham, G. W. (Collins Co.)  
Grant, Geraldine  
Guilford, Vivian G.  
Gutman, Daniel

## H

Hall, Lina  
Harder, Hubert  
Harrington, Burton and Lucelia  
Harrington Homestead (Tenants)  
Hart, Delos  
Haury, Mrs. W. C.  
Hess, Richard A.  
Hickmont, Allerton C.  
Hoffman, Ernest  
Hopkins, P. (Collins Co.)  
Horton, Warren G.

Hosford Tavern (site)  
Hough Block (Mrozieenski, Stanley)  
House, Mrs. Harold  
Hudon, Albert (Collins Co.)  
Humphrey, Harold W.  
Humphrey, Phoebe (site)

## J

Jaeger, Jacob  
Jahn, Mrs. Anna  
Jennison, Whitney  
Johnson, George  
Johnson, Paul  
Johnson, Uno.

## K

Katzung, Florence Buttles  
Kellerman Family  
Kelsey, Luman P.  
Kilburn, Dr. C. J.  
Kimmerlee, Robert  
King, Leslie  
Kistler, Wilson  
Konold, Mrs. F. W.  
Krauch, Harold  
Kreisler, Edward  
Krutsky, Mrs. Olga  
Kyle, Theodore C.

## L

Lane, Mills and William  
Langer, Oswald  
Lawton, Mrs. Fred  
Lee, Harold  
Lennon, Mrs. Eva  
Lewis, Joseph S.  
Lewis, Mary P.  
Lindsay, Bruce  
Ljongquist Family  
Loomis, James L.  
Lowell, James B.

## M

Mahoney, Dennis J.  
Marfyak, John  
Matthews, O. V.  
Matott, Guy (Quintal)  
McConkey, John (Collins Co.)  
McDonald, Dale  
Melzer, Mrs. Herman  
Messenger, Miles  
Mills, A. O.  
Mills, Mrs. Erwin  
Miner, L. B.  
Morris, Ray H.  
Mubarek, Edward (Tenants)  
Myers, Harry

## N

Nelson, Frank and Avis  
Nissen, Nis  
Nixon Family

## O

O'Connor, S. J.  
O'Neil, Mrs. J. P.

Olson, Arthur  
Olson, Carl  
Olson, Lester  
Olson, Paul  
Owen, John, Estate

## P

Parish House C. C.  
Parish, Dexter and Lulu  
Parmelee, Mrs. E. J.  
Parsonage (Baptist)  
Perry, Thomas M.  
Phelph, Dr. Paul S.  
Pierce, Frank  
Potts Estate  
Pratt, Rodney G.  
Provost, W. F.  
Prudhomme, Hector  
Putnam, Herbert E.

## Q

Quintal, Richardson

## R

Rafferty, Edward J.  
Redford, George H.  
Regish, Mrs.  
Reilly, Frank J.  
Repp, David (David Brown)  
Reuber, Edward (Collins Co.)  
Reycroft, Harlan  
Richardson, Danword W.  
Richardson, Russell  
Richardson, Samuel  
Riddell, William C.  
Ripley, Edwin  
Roberts, Mrs. Howard  
Ronan, Leslie  
Rogers, Leonard  
Roncaioli, Charles  
Rote, Dewey

## S

Savick, Frank  
Seeger, Clifford E.  
Seeger, Mrs. Henry  
Selden, John  
Sharp, Fred (Collins Co.)  
Simpson, Mrs. John  
Small, Thomas  
Smith, Ernest (Quintal)  
Smith, Robert  
Snow, Edwin (Konold)  
Soucy, George  
Specia Heirs (Tenants)  
Stevens, Richard B.  
Stickles, Clyde  
"Store on the Green"  
Sturgeon, Mrs. Herbert  
Sweeton, Arthur W.

## T

Tabel, Late John (Town of Canton)  
Taylor, Leslie  
Thivierge, John L. (Konold)  
Thompson, W. Bradley

Tilton, Arthur V. R.  
Tolides, Christie  
Trainer, James G.  
Trinity Church Parish House  
Trumbull, Ralph  
Tuomala, Louis  
Turner, Roy L.  
Turner, Olin

U

Unsworth, Dr. Arthur C.

V

Vaillancourt, Fernan  
Valley House  
VanWiggeran, A. J. (Collins Co.)  
Ventres, Gordon

W

Wacht, John

Waddy, Percy (Collins Co.)  
Wagner, Mrs. Gerald  
Wagner, Richard  
Webster, Mrs. Roy C.  
Werner, Flora  
Whitney, Guy (Collins Co.)  
Wilcox, Robert  
Wilder, Late Frank  
Withe, Stanley  
Wilusz, Joseph P.  
Wood, Harold  
Woodford, Estelle  
Woods, William  
Wright, John  
Wright, Walter R.

Z

Zommer, Theodore (Collins Co.)

## FOREWORD

Whereas the Daughters of the American Revolution are primarily interested in the furtherance of Education, American History, Correct Use of the Flag and all timely activities, we never forget that nothing is better than its foundation.

Our Country's foundations were laid by our forefathers, God-fearing men, men with great strength of character and good common sense.

Consequently it seems fitting that we keep alive these qualifications and traditions. In view of all this the Past Regents Club of Phoebe Humphrey Chapter, D.A.R. of Collinsville, Conn present:

### CANTON'S OLDEST HOUSES

These houses, all in the 100 year bracket, are the homes of yesteryear.

They radiate the rich tradition of our past and while we must not retrograde, let's never forget that in these homes the seeds of today were sown.

We are also including a brief resume of the Churches and Schools of that period.

We are indebted to articles by Hon. W. E. Simonds, The Abiel Brown Book, Phelps History of Simsbury, Barbour's Reminiscences, Lure of the Litchfield Hills, Mr. Clair Elston and his notes from Mr. Samuel Collins' Diary as well as a host of friends who have aided in the work.

May it prove both useful and entertaining.

SARA LOUGEE LATIMER, *Editor.*

## PART I

# Old Houses — East Hill, Canton and Albany Turnpike

BY BERTHA CASE BRISTOL

### INTRODUCTION

This chapter or section includes the old houses on East Hill, called Woodchuck or Chestnut Hill, Canton (the part called Canton Village or Suffrage) and also nearby houses on the Old Litchfield and Albany Turnpikes.

I have used the 1855 and the 1869 maps as guide posts. The "facts and fancies" have been written as near as possible to the notes of history and words narrated by the owners.

It is impossible to describe all the details, and dates of the years from 1737 to 1869. I hope these gleanings will give some light to the years of yore.

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Let us start on our imaginary journey: Hiram speaking, "Good morning Betsy Ann, it's a 'pretty' morning, get on your old gray bonnet with the blue ribbon on it, while I hitch old Dobbin to the shay. You and I are going visiting old houses today. I want to see where they are located and learn something about them. Let's swing around on Albany Turnpike and pick up Bertha Bristol and we will all talk as we journey along."

"First we are going to East Hill, the site of our first settlers." Up and over the hills and dales, through the woods and over the old road which had ruts and stones and even grass growing in between the wheel tracks. Yes, the "good old days" were full of ruts, stones, bushes and more troubles, yet by faith in God, and hard labor, they were overcome."

"Get up Dobbin, keep going, we want to visit as many places as we can today."

Some of the conversation along the way was as follows, and much of it only thoughts that ran through our minds as we tried to visualize the picture of our home land many, many years ago in the early days of settlement, the land our forefathers ventured their all on and struggled to survive.

The women of today little realize what the women and mothers went through when they settled on the hills and in the valley of what is now called Canton. It was a part of Simsbury or Massacoe (the Indian name) but usually called "the wilderness". Years ago the men set forth from Massacoe to the west into the wilderness, to look over the land and to report what conditions were for making settlements.

Two brothers started out in November of 1736, after the fall crops were harvested and the other work done. They went over the first ledge and on over to the west and found on the heights, good fertile land, deep forest and good hunting so essential in those days. Before they could return, they were caught in a blizzard and cold weather and later their bodies were found frozen. This did not daunt the others. The following spring, more set out and came as far as East Hill, Woodchuck Hill or Chestnut Hill. Richard Case came in 1737. The site of the first house was supposed to be opposite the present John Case place, now occupied by Carl Olson and family. The next year the four Barber Brothers with their mother came further west and settled in the Cherry's Brook Valley. About this time Abraham Case and Amos Case settled on East Hill. Some other settlers, at this time, were Capt. Ezekiel Humphrey, Capt. Josiah Case, Joseph Mills and many others.

This chapter confines us mostly to East Hill and Suffrage, now Canton. The next settler mentioned will be Dudley Case, who settled in Canton in 1742. This old place burned in November 1874. It was known as the Old Hosford House or Tavern and stood on the Turnpike from Hartford to Albany. Abram Hosford kept this tavern for fifty years.

The people came so fast, it is difficult to determine just the order in which they settled. It was very necessary for them to travel and settle in numbers because of the many dangers in the dense forests. They also helped each other with the hard labor of cutting trees and building homes. The women also helped each other in sickness and childbirth. Grandmother Barber was said to have had her satchel packed and ready to go and help any who were sick. It was with great interest, when as a young girl I heard the stories how "Aunt Maryette", as she was called, went on ox sled through a blizzard in the middle of the night to some home of sickness to try and save a life.

Now let us turn back to the settlers on East Hill and their homes. Richard Case is supposed to have been the first settler and to have erected the first dwelling house in this part of the town. His son Sylvanus was the first English child born in the limits of West Simsbury. He had twelve children, ten sons and two daughters. Now let us visit the home of Carl Olson.

## CARL OLSON

Mrs. Esther Olson has the original deed to the land settled by Serg. Richard Case, 2nd in 1737. The farm has never been out of the family. The first log cabin was near the present house, some say opposite and some say toward the school. The house built by Capt. Uriah Case in 1791 stood opposite the east end of Morgan Road. Remains of the chimney and foundation still may be seen. John Case built the present one and from available information, it seems to have been about 1847. It has had many changes through the years, the last being a modern kitchen. A large cow barn was built some years ago. The house on the

hill had U. C. in the bricks of the house chimney and U. C. 1792 in large wooden letters and figures on the side of the barn. Mr. and Mrs. Olson have the large farm in good condition. Their family should be proud of the fact that they were born and live on this old site of seven generations of the Case family.

## JOHN WRIGHT

John Wright 1950—Ludwig Bahre 1890—Amos Hosford 1855 map

The John B. Wright House is on East Hill Road in Canton, just below Morgan Road. Ludwig Bahre lived here. It was built during the Revolutionary War. According to legend, the house was built by a Hessian deserter. This story was told to Mrs. Wright by Amiel Bahre, son of Ludwig: This nameless Hessian lived there for an indefinite time, the house having been built in 1776. It was then sold to Charles Smith, better known as “Charlie”. He operated a small blacksmith shop across the road opposite the house.

It was 1855, when Ludwig Bahre bought the house. There was a center chimney made of stone, three fireplaces, a sittin’ room, a keeping room (we would call it a kitchen today), a pantry and two bedrooms. The house is a story and a half, dutch colonial or New York dutch colonial. Originally, the upstairs was an open loft. Amiel tells of his brothers and sisters sharing this loft as children. One day, his father decided to partition off two separate bedrooms upstairs. In the end gables are the north room and south room. In the south room, there is a plaster ceiling sturdy and uncracked. It shows evidence of being put in place by a craftsman who was more accustomed to his tailoring shears than to a plaster’s trowel — for Ludwig was a master tailor. With the help of his older sons, Ludwig tore out the bulky chimney that went up through the loft leaving a half size room and added a dormer which made another bedroom.

An amusing tale from Amiel was about the stairway. This stairway led to the keeping room with a window. This delighted the children because they could peek and check on the goings-on in the room.

In 1880, Ludwig added an ell part to the house. The ell was a large sunny kitchen, off which was a woodshed covering a dug well and a pantry. This woodshed and pantry is now a kitchen with concrete slab poured over all. What was the kitchen is now the dining room, to which has been added a fireplace. What was the keeping room and sittin’ room with its “casket door” is now an “L” shaped room. In place of the “casket door”, there is a picture window. The two bedrooms downstairs are now one master bedroom. What had been another pantry is now a bathroom. Where the stairway and peeping window was, there is now a large closet and a stairway going in the reverse direction. From the dining room a little porch has been added. Amiel told Mrs. Wright we are the sixth family to make a home here. He also said the house has had its face lifted so many times, he wouldn’t recognize the old place.

The changes and improvements contributed by each family make it unlikely that the Hessian's ghost would recognize the place if he wanted to come back and haunt it.

### ALFRED CABLES

This place was known as the Kellerman farm for many years.

In the Brown Book quote "Darius Hill resided on East Hill on the premises which after his death were owned and occupied by Titus Case. Titus Case commenced his family state on East Hill on the place now occupied by Reuben Hall." The 1855 map states Reuben Hall lived on this place. The house was built by Titus Case in 1791. This story and a half house has not changed very much. Rooms have been added on the ell part and some partitions have been removed.

One can visualize the old rope bedsteads under the wooden rafters overhead as the children climbed into bed. The older children slept up in the loft or attic. This has been remodeled into rooms. The narrow hallway, with its flow of life upstairs and down, has been taken out and put into rooms.

The old floors which were scrubbed and sanded in days of yore still remain. These old floors often had wide cracks in them and were very cold, but the old rag carpets which were made at odd times by the thrifty mothers would keep the cold from blowing in. Sometimes paper and straw were put under the hand made carpets. Many attics had the old large looms for weaving these rag carpets.

Outside is an old oblong stone sink, the stone sink being replaced by an iron one. These stone sinks were made by hand of one solid stone and are seldom seen now. The immense stones and steps were cut by a hand method, which we know so little about now, and are now smooth with the tread of people, but will never wear out.

The Cables have lived there for some years as the Kellermans moved to Collinsville.

### ARTHUR OLSON

This place was known as the Crowley farm before the Olson's bought it. The name is F. Peck on the 1869 map. The Brown Book tells us that John Hill, Jr. settled in 1740 in the East Hill school district on the farm now owned by Nelson Aldridge, this name is on the 1855 map.

Mrs. Arthur Olson thinks the house they now live in was built about 1845 or 47. This is the usual large frame house with an ell in the rear. It has four fireplaces, one being in the basement. It seems that these old houses were built around the old stone chimneys bristling with fireplaces.

There are large barns on the opposite side of the road.

## MRS. STANLEY DONALDSON

Donaldson's or the Albert Bahre house is situated on the premises of the Roswell Barnes place, 1855 map. In the Abiel Brown Book, we read Ruggles Humphrey (son of Solomon Humphrey, Sr.) resided on these premises. He married Lucy, daughter of Amos Case, Sr. They had no children and when he died he left part of his farm to the Connecticut Missionary Society. This land was always called the "Missionary Lot."

When the Kellermans owned their farm near by (Alfred Cables place now), they bought 225 acres from Richard Wagner, part of which tract was the Missionary Lot. It was on the western side of the tract and bordered Morgan Road.

The first house burned and Roswell Barnes built the second house.

Roswell Barnes' second wife was Susan Wilcox Barnes. Susan was very slow and walked accordingly — maybe in the later years of her life. Their "next door neighbor" lived quite a distance, yet within sight of each other. As they knew Susan's slow method of transportation, when they saw Susan leave her house they would say, "Here comes Susan and we haven't a cake today, we'll have plenty of time to get it done before Susan comes over the hump," (where the road went over a knoll). Maybe it would be a frozen pie from the old back cheese pantry or "buttery," they would get and thaw out before Susan got over the hump but they always had plenty of time and Susan had her cake or pie and enjoyed it. Later, Susan came to Canton and died there.

## FLORA WERNER

### "INGLESIDE"

Maurice and Flora Werner — Henry Foote 1855 Map

The first house was a two story house built by Rev. Gideon Mills, in 1740. The land belonged to his wife Elizabeth Higley. This house burned probably because wheat and grain was stored upstairs. Rev. Gideon Mills was born in 1713 and died August 4, 1772 at the age of fifty-nine (Brown Book). He was the son of Peter Mills who came from Holland. His wife Elizabeth, daughter of Brewster Higley spent her youth and girlhood in the family of her cousin, the first Governor Trumbull of Lebanon. Gideon Mills was a minister in the old Simsbury parish ten years previous to 1755. He came to West Simsbury and preached for one or two years and was installed in the year 1759. All the time of his ministry here, he lived two and one-half miles from the meeting house over a hill. He had to travel over a cold uneven road from Werners over John Case's hill and down a steep mountain to Canton Center Church, a hard journey traveled more than once a week, summer and winter. He lived on the Werner place until his death. He died singing the 38th Psalm. His son Lieutenant Gideon Mills married Ruth

Humphrey and resided on the farm left by his honored father. He lived there until 1800 then he moved to Barkhamsted.

The house now standing was built in 1788 by Lieutenant Gideon Mills. This house is a story and a half. Early settlers found this type of house was easier to heat as the two story house usually required an upstairs fireplace and was taxed more. Usually some of the family slept under the rafters and were snug and warm in quilts and feathers with a hot soap stone at their feet. It was great fun to awaken in the morning and find little snow drifts on the quilts.

After passing through several hands, the house was owned by Henry Foote, 1855 map. Sebastian Werner bought this place from Jacob Pflugher (pronounced flee-gar) in March 1873. He came from Germany. He was so named after Saint Sebastian being born on this Saint's day. He came to America in 1857 from a Baron's estate where he was game keeper. After landing in Castle Garden, New York, he expected to find a job in America like his job in Germany and so he was dressed accordingly. His outfit was green pants and coat, buttons, game bag, gun and a long sword called a hirshfinner (pronounced hirsh finner) or deer sword. When he landed he asked for a nobleman or if he could see a Baron. People didn't know what he was talking about. Times were hard when Buchanan was president and he couldn't find work. Finally he found work with Ed Clark of New Britain for board and lodging.

Levi Case, who lived near by, surveyed the place for Sebastian Werner when he bought it from Pflugher in the winter of 1873 and moved onto it in March. Snow covered the ground and also many rocks and stones on the land. When the snow melted, they all had to move the stones and Flora said they have been picking up stones ever since. However, the land is a beautiful spot and the family has enjoyed living here even though they had to work hard.

Part of the house was in poor condition, especially the parlor. A cherry tree was growing up inside near the fireplace. They went to the woods (Maurice was seventeen years old) and cut timbers and placed new sills underneath, also put on outside boards, shingles, etc. When completed, it cost over \$100 which was a large sum at that time.

The front hall is now made into a bedroom and the door boarded up. The door now used is the funeral door in the front south room as in other old houses.

The old colonial houses usually had a small front hall or sometimes no hall between the two front rooms. There was not room to turn with pall bearers and casket, therefore a wide door, called the funeral door, was put close to the corner of the house and opened into the parlor. Usually this door was kept closed with a bar across the inside.

The ruins of an old dam were on this place and Flora said, the site of the first saw mill. The granite blocks that were used to build the Collins Company dam in 1867 were taken from the granite quarry in Werner's pasture. Flora told how she and Abbie when children, went down to see a Mrs. Hart who lived in a tent and boarded the workmen. The men were from Unionville. She remembers being afraid of Mrs. Hart's sister because she wore her hair in bangs curled on the ends and called "spit curls."

Flora also told me about a strange stone compartment that was built into the old chimney. It has an entrance in the basement and above this entrance, it widens out like a mammoth hogshead then it narrows up to about the top of the first story and is sealed off. It could not be used for an oven as the stones are rough inside and it is too large a space. A carpenter with a flashlight crawled in and wondered what it could have been used for as much work had been put into its building. Had it been a place to hide children from the Indians? It is high enough to get air yet closed off from the top.

There are two cellars, the front and back with a solid wall between and a small door opening in the wall. Sometimes, we wish old chimneys could talk and answer our questions of curiosity. There is a fireplace in each of the two front rooms, and the fireplace in the kitchen has a brick oven.

The rooms seem to cling to this old central chimney and the family itself clung to the gigantic hearth beneath the kitchen fireplace. On the lintel or heavy hewn beam extended across the top were hung the kitchen utensils that were "hangable" and clustered around the sides many others. Often the father hung his gun in easy reach over the mantle and out of reach of the children. They trusted in God and kept their powder dry. "Faith of our Father's, Holy Faith, we will be true to Thee 'till death."

### B. E. CONKLIN

Mr. Conklin and his daughter reside here. B. E. Conklin married Rosa Candace Case daughter of Asa Case and settled on the Case place. Map 1855 states Levi Case, a noted surveyor, lived here. Levi was the father of Asa Case. He was also recognized as a safe authority on the history of the town. Judge Sylvester Barbour states "It was like sitting at the foot of Gamaliel to talk with this learned man on historical facts."

The Cases were in the direct line of pioneer settlers on East Hill. The Biographical Record of Hartford County records this line of Cases.

The house is a two story colonial type and has not been changed much from the original building. The frame of this house was raised in Barkhamsted in 1822, left uncovered for two years then bought by Pitt Humphrey (who lived where the Werners live now), and brought here and sold to Levi Case.

The big chimney has been removed and the outside of the house has been shingled. Some of the small glass windows remain in the second story with twelve over eight glass.

Near this site, was born in 1779, the Rev. Herman Humphrey. He was president of Amherst College from 1823 to 1845. This family had many noted people including doctors, lawyers and ministers. There were fourteen clergymen in this family and its descendants.

## OLIN TURNER

This house has the name of Edward and Harry Case on 1855 map.

George Case lived here with his son Burton about 1888 and Mr. and Mrs. Schell and family came soon after. Maurice Werner said, "Harry, Betsy and Wealthy built this house. Betsy outlived the others and she gave the place to George Case for taking care of her."

Someone said that Harry Case was straight and tall and looked like General Washington. Maurice said he always gave very precise orders, when he worked for him and paid accordingly. He would ask, "What will you tax me for this job?"

Just before it was time for the hired help to come to dinner, he would pass around large apples for the men to fill up on.

The house now standing has been changed somewhat, but still retains the type of the early settlers. Some of the rooms have the wide board floors and many iron hinges and latches are found in the house. This house has a background of hills and ravines with a brook running through which used to run a saw mill in early days.

## CHARLES BAHRE

Records indicate that this house was built by Capt. Josiah Case in 1743 and in my search can find to other house ever built on this place. Brown Book quote "Josiah Case resided on the premises now occupied by his grandson Gen. Jarvis Case, Esq. on Chestnut Hill. Capt. Fithin Case second son of Capt. Josiah Case settled where his son Gen. Jarvis Case. now lives." This family had eleven children.

"Gen. Case organized a military company called the 'Canton Cadets' and was its first captain and was advanced from that to the rank of brigadier-general of the state militia. He was a man of striking dignity and gentility, erect and stately, such a one as would attract the attention of strangers. He was long prominent in the choir. He began a carefully prepared record of the weather in 1857 and it was continued by his son George J. Case." (Sylvester Barbour's book)

His son, George J. Case, resided here about 1904. This is the usual old New England type house, large frame and shows age. The house

speaks for itself of the grim struggle for existence it has had through the ages of time. With the winter's hail, snow and sleet, and summers scorching heat, this weather beaten house has survived.

Like an old person it needs a "helping hand." Many a house has had an "uplift" and become an attractive place. One can only think of the many people who have found refuge and comfort beneath its roof and the old wooden cradles by the fireplace, that rocked to and fro, as the mother patiently knitted socks for her family.

The barns show it was a farm and no doubt butter and cheese were made here in the early days.

Mr. Bahre worked long and hard when he was able, cherishing and caring for his family. Some of his children and grandchildren still reside on the place.

### HAROLD JAEGER

This was the Edwin White place in 1869, and the Arleigh Richardson place about 1940. Gen. Ezekiel Hosford is on the map of 1855.

From the Brown Book, page thirty-one is the following: "Peter Curtis with his wife settled in West Simsbury about 1744 on lands owned by Ezekiel Hosford, at a place called Onion Brook near Onion Mountain." This was on the land where Ezekiel Hosford lived.

Opposite the house was a Sash and Blind Factory owned by Mr. Hosford.

This large two story house is located on the East Hill to Simsbury Road. The house is pinned together, and framed after the usual type of that period. It contains three fireplaces, one with a Dutch oven downstairs, and a fireplace on the second floor.

### HAROLD WOOD

This house was previously known as the Chidsey place. It is under the name of Vorlon Case on the map of 1855.

It was built by Gideon Curtis fourth son of Peter Curtis sometime before 1789. Gideon Curtis married Betsey Mills. He built the house now standing some forty rods northeast from Gen. Ezekiel Hosford's. He was by occupation a blacksmith.

Mr. and Mrs. Wood bought this place in 1938. Mrs. Wood thinks the old part was built about 1750, the main part in 1850.

Some very old grist mill stones were moved to this site by Dr. Butler in 1931. This old mill was in a valley east of the house.

## JAMES LEE LOOMIS

Records say it was built by Jeremy Case about 1745-1747 and until recent years was called the Orestes Case place.



The Brown Book says that, "Solomon Humphrey, Jr. (married Lucy Case) resided the first twelve years of his family state with his father, on the place now owned by Orestes Case, East Hill near the confines of Simsbury." The house is the old salt-box type, and still retains its historic lines with the long slanting roof in the rear. The basement walls are laid up with large stones and there is a fireplace in the basement. There are two fireplaces on the main floor. An old well, originally in the back kitchen or cheese room is now underneath the dining room. With modern improvements, the water comes from a deep artesian well.

Some of the names in the family were Elisha, Grove, Everest, Orestes and Frederick (all Cases). However, the name on the 1855 map is E. and L. Ackert. They probably resided there at that date. In later years, the house has changed hands many times. Many changes have been made by adding rooms and taking out partitions. It is reported that an old stone chimney was removed in 1875, which measured fourteen feet by fourteen feet at its base. One of these chimneys filled up a good share of the old cellars. It was like going around "Robin Hoods barn" to go around one of them and you could get lost on the way, especially if there was a side cellar dug out which was commonly done in many of these first houses, being just a dark hole or small room adjoining the cellar. It was ideal for storing vegetables and bottles of cider and maybe a few other things. These chimneys were made to last and they did, for often when we see an old house tumbling by decay, the chimney stands for many years unless torn down.

## ERNEST HOFFMANN

This house is referred to by Judge Latimer as the "Castle on the Rhine." The Rhine must be the deep ravine east of the house. It is a very large fortress-like house, sturdy and weathered by age. This house certainly defies the elements of time: rain, hail and snow. It has views of glorious hills on the east and south with deep valleys between. Huron Case lived here for fifty years. His daughter taught school about 1868 and later went to India as a missionary.

Quote from Brown Book — "Lt. Charles Humphrey, 2nd, son of Charles Humphrey, settled in West Simsbury in 1753. Their first building was erected on the east side of the farm. He, afterwards, built and lived on the western part of his farm at the site now occupied by his grandsons, Charles Humphrey and Berea Case" (on 1855 map).

The Charles then living on the site was the fifth generation by the name of Charles, five generations in succession. Two sisters Hannah and Elizabeth were left on the place and remained under the care of Uriah and James Case until their death. Willis Case and family resided there and their daughter and husband still live there.

This house has a large stone chimney, also two other chimneys from projecting ells. The ells are two stories high and have the old fashioned bedrooms. The walls of the bedrooms in these old houses are plain and severe with straight walls with a few pictures and mottos. These mottos were usually worked on perforated paper or spatter work, with the words "God Bless Our Home" or "Gone But Not Forgotten."

This house has recently been painted white and looks outstanding with its background of hills, the foliage changing with the seasons.

### MR. AND MRS. GEORGE JOHNSON

Mr. and Mrs. George Johnson live on the place near the southwest corner of the mountain called Woodchuck Hill. Their childhood homes were about a mile apart. Mrs. Johnson's ancestors lived on the very site where their home is now situated. Eli Case, son of Serg. Richard Case, 2nd the first settler, built on this site about 1765. The present house was built by Truman Allen in 1839. Truman married Harriet, the daughter of Eli. The house has always continued in the Case family. Mrs. Johnson was Edith Case, the daughter of Francis Case. The other Case ancestors were Lucian Case (father of Francis) who married and settled here in 1839 and Berea Case the father of Lucian.

This well-built house can take pride in its early settlers and their families. The happy home of five generations is good for many more.

The main house is a two story frame house with an ell added. A bay-window was built years ago and is like a small greenhouse filled with beautiful plants. These old homes personify many pleasant dec-

ades of happy living. Somehow you feel it in the atmosphere as you cross the threshold.

In these old houses the hearth was the symbol of the home, around which the home life centered. These sturdy and patient people labored both indoors and out and we find results of their labor as we visit their homes today.

Opposite the house was a cider mill and below this was a saw mill. There are well built barns here now.

On their property; a little to the east of the house can be seen the stones and ruins of Constitution Bridge built in 1787.

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Now we come to the place owned by Amiel Bahre, with the house built much later than our old maps signify.

On the opposite side of the road there are mostly barns now. Yet the land is the site of a house which I hold with respect and cherish with girlhood memories. This is the site of the home of my ancestor Amos Case who was one of the first settlers of East Hill.

From the Brown Book quote "Amos Case brother of Abraham Case, son of Bartholomew and Mary (daughter of Ensign Samuel Humphrey) came in 1740 and resided on East Hill on the place now occupied by Myron Case. They had ten children, five sons and five daughters."

This house was standing in 1906, at the time of Canton's Centennial and was given the place of honor on the badges worn at the Centennial celebration.

It was taken down about 1911. This house was really the old type house of primitive days. Yet the home life was almost sacred to me with the family Bible on the table and the fireplaces, a large one in the basement, hewn beam ceilings, cheese room and many, many other things. I slept under the rafters of this story and a half house with my cousin when the thermometer registered zero and below, yet with our hot soap stone and feather beds, we were never very cold. I will confess we ran downstairs by the fire to dress in the morning. I can almost smell the hot buckwheat griddle cakes cooking in the kitchen and see Uncle Myron pushing wood into the stove.

The beams over head were toast brown in color, but showed the cuts of the woodman's axe.

In the winter Uncle Myron would bundle up, twine the old long knit scarf several times around his head and down to the old bucket well he would go after water.

These certainly were the "good old days" in fact and not fancy.

## LESLIE RONAN

The present owners of this house are Mr. and Mrs. Leslie Ronan. A previous owner was Peter Johnson. The name on the 1855 map is Luther Higley, and on the 1869 map Asa Case. The present owners think the old house originally was built where their back shed now stands, the front part being built later. We have no dates to go by.

## MISS MARY E. JAMES

This house stands on the corner of East Hill Road and Albany Turnpike. It was known as the Milton Case place years ago. It probably was built by Asa Case about 1785 or 1786. From the Brown Book "Asa Case married in 1786 and lived on the place now occupied by his youngest son Milton," who was born in 1801 the youngest of ten children.

This house was built a story and one-half high, with dormer windows added later. It has a stone basement extending up to the first floor level, also a large stone chimney in the center.

Mr. and Mrs. Henry Sobieski came here to live about 1900 and lived here nearly fifty years.

The basement fireplace has been bricked up and the large Dutch oven removed but two other fireplaces are left. Many of the old floor boards remain. The rooms have low ceilings and wainscote part way up from the floor with a chair rail on top. Some of the iron latches still remain. I have heard that when the Sobieskis lived there, they had a pony that would lift the latch with his nose and walk in the kitchen door.

This house stands very close to the road, so near that when Uncle Edgar and Aunt Julia Case used to go from East Hill to Collinsville to swap butter, cheese, eggs, etc., for other household supplies they would drive close to the kitchen door. Mrs. Milton Case or "Aunt Eunice" as we called her, would just open the door and pass her basket of eggs to Aunt Julia and say "I want so much sugar" or whatever else she wanted for her eggs. You could step from the wagon into the kitchen it was so near.

## ROBERT WILCOX

This house is situated on the corner of East Hill Road and Albany Turnpike. The house was recently purchased by Mr. Wilcox who has a greenhouse and nursery stock. The Longmoor family lived there previously. This place was called the Rollin Higley farm for many years. We find the name Rollin Higley on the 1869 map, but no house is listed on the 1855 map.

It is the usual two story type house with three fireplaces, one has been discontinued. The living room has the large fireplace with the Dutch oven. Some of the windows have the six over six panes, others

have been replaced with the larger type glass. The house has the usual ell, and is clapboarded on the outside and painted white.

The recent owners are restoring it to a beautiful home.

### MRS. J. P. O'NEIL

This house is situated on East Hill Road. The name on the 1855 map is Alanson Andrus, on the 1869 map it is J. Linchln. Thomas J. Murphy owned this place previously to the O'Neils for twenty-seven years.

It has two old fireplaces, one with a Dutch oven.

### CLIFFORD COMEAU

The name is F. Mills on 1855 map. This house was built by Ralph Dyer (son of Benjamin Dyer) in 1806. One history book notes that Ralph Dyer helped his father in the making of tallow candles.

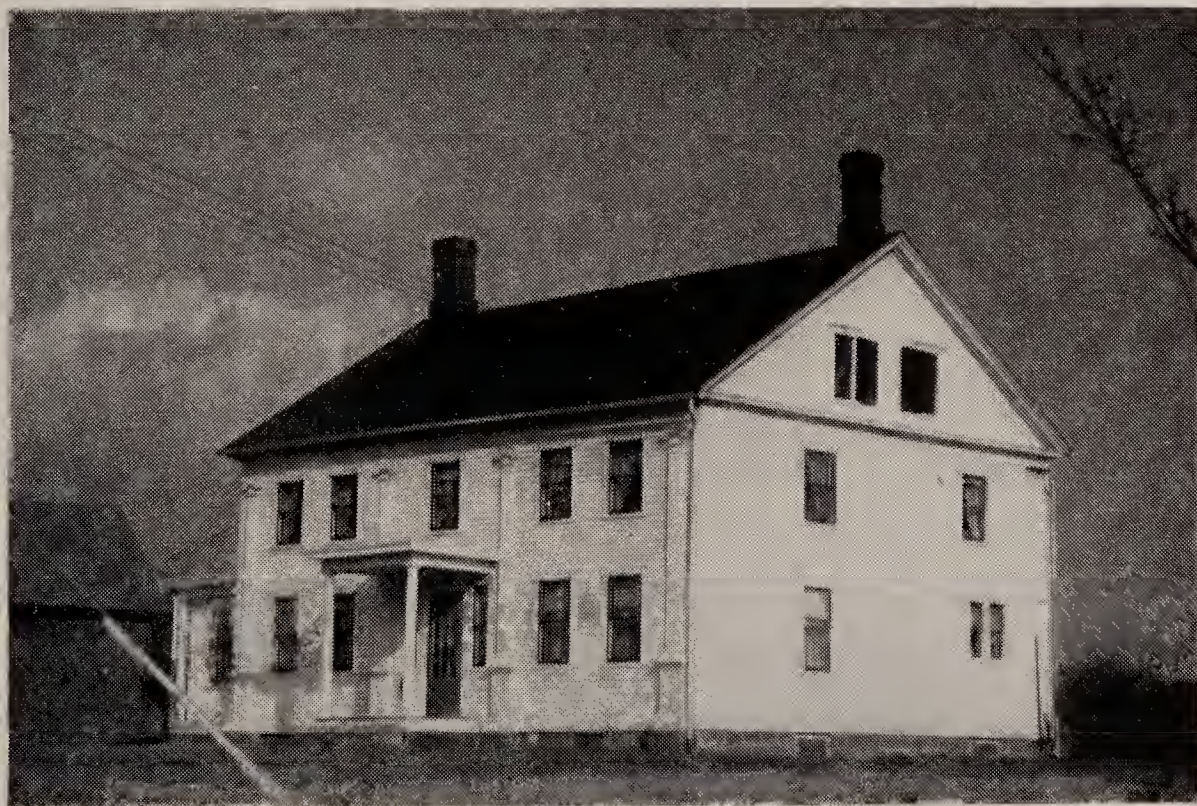
Clifford Comeau bought the house from Cherubino Donnini in 1951.

The house was the usual square box type, but it has been added onto in all directions with apartments for many families and so many people have lived here that it is useless to try to name them.

It has been told that the old tree near the house is the second oldest in the state.

### RALPH DOWD

This house was built by Benjamin Dyer in 1747, he was a school-mate of Benjamin Franklin. He moved with his wife from Boston to



Hartford in 1735, and in the year 1745 moved to West Simsbury (now Canton) and settled on this site. He was a tallow candler by trade.

Benjamin Dyer obtained about six hundred acres of land on the southeast end of what is claimed to be the old parsonage grant.

The second Benjamin was born November 1747 in the house afterward occupied by Luther Higley, Esq., a very prominent man in town. Luther Higley, Esq. sold to Page in 1855 and this was called the Page place for many years. Page died in 1880.

Ralph Dowd's father moved from Canton Center about 1898-1900 and made many changes on the house. Recently, when the new road was constructed this house was moved back or southeast from the highway.

Ralph Dowd stated that the old fourteen by fifteen foot stone chimney had been removed. It contained seven flues, up to the attic floor, then brick through the roof. When this chimney was removed, the old fireplaces were torn out and modern corner fireplaces were put in. The large frame is pegged together with wooden pegs and the plates are eight by eight and forty feet long. The cased beams and corner posts remain in the rooms.

This old house has been so well kept that it is apt to deceive one as to its age. It has the colonial look and very noticeable is the high pilastered columns on the outside of the house. (We see them inside the old houses, but not often on the outside of the house.) These four pilastered columns extend from the stone basement to the roof beam extending over the second story windows. They are beautifully carved with Ionic design at the top.

Mr. Dowd is a lover of antiques and has filled the house with beautiful antiques of all kinds.

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We now turn east onto Dowd Avenue. Not many of the houses on this road were built before 1869. I found that the parsonage, the Allen place and the Biglow house were there before that date. The old road was over Huckleberry Hill and was called the "Kings Highway," This road to Collinsville was built later.

Records show that the road past Mrs. Brays was not there. It was all "Green," Common or Town Pound, with the church on this plot and cemetery in back.

The "town pound" was used to pasture animals. Sometimes stray animals were "impounded" and a fee paid to get them out.

Later after the church was moved strife and struggles went on as to who would get the most out of the land on the pound. Neighbors would quarrel and some even put hog pens on the green. Mr. Hill said, that to settle the trouble, they finally tried to plot it off into the center by sections. There were public weighing scales on the east end.

## JOHN L. BUTLER

This house was a school house "on the turnpike or there about" and was moved to its present location. Mrs. Ellen Allen lived there for many years. The school house was raised up and rooms built underneath and is now the second floor.

The record states "In 1808 Robert Hughes bought the old school and moved it fifty rods south and fitted it for a dwelling." He was a tailor and carried on the trade here for many years. This house has a modern look now and one would never think that the walls had ever witnessed school children with dunce caps on or school master with hickory sticks.

## STANLEY WITHE, JR.

This house was called the Biglow House, because Mr. Biglow owned it for many years. Many people have lived in this house. Herman Hamlin in 1809, Mr. Peabody about 1920 and E. Berg soon after. It is under the name of William Cook on 1869 map.

Mr. Biglow was a jolly tin peddler and all the neighbors enjoyed seeing the old tin peddler and his cart come in sight. Everyone ran to the attic or cellar for rags and bottles to trade in for tin ware, brooms and many other articles. The children were happy with their new shiny tin cups, as Mr. Biglow drove out of sight.

## PARSONAGE OF THE CANTON BAPTIST CHURCH

This parsonage was built in 1807 by a Stock Company, Elder Atwell being Pastor of this church for many years. This house was rented to people from about 1918-1951. The Barkers lived there in 1918, H. Bristol in 1919, Merton Sheley in 1925, George Kellerman and Alphonso Regish later on. At this date 1955-56 it is used with resident ministers living there.

This house has low ceilings, two fireplaces, the usual small window panes (some have been removed), old stone chimney and ell built on the back. The stone chimney was originally laid up with stone and mud clay with large wooden beams to support the floor. The beams in these old houses often were charred and blackened but seldom caught fire.

Some of the old big shade trees were blown down and removed.

The house is situated on the south side of Dowd Avenue with the old stone front steps very near to the road.

## CLYDE STICKLES

This house on Depot Road in Canton, is sometimes called the Cemetery House. It is now occupied by Clyde Stickles and family. This place is located on the old road going over Huckelberry Hill to Collinsville. This road was called the "Kings Highway."

The house for many years was known as the William Bailey place.

The house was built as a school house near the green about 1808 and moved to where it now stands. It is owned by the Cemetery Association.

### RALPH TRUMBULL

1950

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Bray purchased this house in 1939. It was called Nulty's "small house," and is opposite the Canton Green. On the map of 1855 it is known as the Brockett place.

Mrs. Bray said that old insurance papers called it "Century House."

This house has an ell which has been changed and remodeled and a large enclosed veranda added. It is a one and a half story house with the windows having small panes of glass, painted with the old fashioned (or really new fashioned now) red paint and white trimmings. One can sit on the veranda and enjoy the Band concert or other "doings" on the green.

### WARREN G. HORTON

1941-1956

Some of the owners of this place were as follows: 1913—Bromislaw Szczapanski, 1913 — Joseph Gavalis, 1894 — Mary P. Hawks, 1859 — Lyman Carrier, 1854 — R. L. Hawley. Before this date, it became confused as the house was moved in 1848 and at present the previous owners are difficult to trace.

The Oliver Humphrey House stands on the corner of Depot Road, originally called the Kings Highway and Dowd Avenue, facing the southwest corner of Canton Green. It is reported in a history of old houses of Canton by Mrs. Burton Higley in 1911, to have been originally built on the opposite side of the green, probably next to the present site of the Baptist Church. From old deeds and records, it appears that the ell of the present house, which is built around a 7½' by 5' chimney, was the original house, and when it was moved in 1848 the front was added. This premise is carried out by the fact that no fireplaces were built in this new section, but a chimney started several feet above the first floor, was provided to take care of stoves which were coming into popular use about this time.

From 1859 to 1941 when the present owners purchased it, this house changed hands some fourteen times, indicating that the original family had moved on to another area and as Canton Green area was very closely built up, it is reasonable to suppose that many young couples started their lives together in this house. Sometime before 1880 a staircase was added from the side porch to the upstairs bedroom, making the house into two apartments. It suffered from neglect for some years and when taken over by the present owners, was in rather decrepit condition, having stood empty for two years. In restoring it to livability,

the central chimney was uncovered from behind cupboards, plaster, and lath; the fireplace had been bricked up for close to fifty years. The old hand made brick was so attractive, the tapered irregular shelves made by the back of the Dutch oven and flues for two fireplaces, so interesting, that a pine paneled kitchen was built from four tiny rooms, all but cupboards or passageways, leaving the whole vast chimney exposed in the room. The large shallow fireplace and Dutch oven faced into the old original kitchen and this was made into the living room. Very little of the original hardware and decorative paneling remained in 1941. One can only suppose why previous owners chopped off the chair rail above the wide board paneling in the front room. During the period from 1860 to 1880 hard times must have come upon the various occupants as old deeds read that they sold off pieces of land, which had been a two acre piece, until it dwindled to its present three-eighths of an acre.

## HAROLD E. LEE

### Gleason-Harger House 1786

This house was built soon after the War of the Revolution by Chauncey Gleason of Farmington. It was originally built with a high double-pitched roof, after the pattern of, at that time, the most fashionable houses in Farmington and Simsbury. Mr. Gleason was soon after connected in trade with Elijah Cowles & Co., of Farmington, who were then carrying on a large trade with both the East and West Indies. They used to send large quantities of grain to the West Indies, and built a kiln for drying grain near the present residence of Chester Gilman in Pine Meadow. Many of the perforated tiles used in the kiln were unearthed in excavating for the Canal railroad. It used to be said that the first hogshead of St. Croix rum ever brought to Simsbury was landed in the above named house. About 1800, Mathew Ives, since of Westfield, Mass., went into partnership with Mr. Gleason and remained a few years, when they sold out to Jared Mills, Jr. who carried on the mercantile business until his death in 1821. Mr. Mills built the first powder mill in Canton. The house came into the possession of Mr. Harger about 1835, who removed the high roof and put on a modern one, and removed the piazza, which was on the front and east end of the house. Before the roof was changed, legend is that the attic was used for dancing and Masonic meetings. Also, of interest, is an opening in the attic floor from which can be seen considerable space between the chimney and paneling of room walls. With this, goes the story that slaves were once concealed in this space.

The house is built around two large six by six foot chimneys. There is one bedroom fireplace on the second floor, four on the first floor and one in the cellar. Two fireplaces have Dutch ovens. The fireplaces were built shallow so as to throw more heat, and have original paneling around them. The cellar has two plastered rooms, the back room was a kitchen and the front room was the dining room for the farm help. A

dumb waiter went to the upstairs dining room. Legend also says that, at one time, the front of the cellar was used as a store. There is an eight foot well in the cellar and above the well attached to the cellar ceiling are two parallel wooden rollers of different diameter. Around the large roller was a rope and a bucket; and around the smaller roller was a rope with a rock weight attached. This was the method of raising and lowering into the well.

Mr. John Wesley Harger, Deacon of Canton Baptist Church, married Laura Lucretia Dailey (granddaughter of Jared Mills) in 1831. The fifth generation of the family are now living in the house. Many letters written by the family have been found and tell interesting details of life as lived in Canton in the early days. Some letters were written before the Post Office used stamps. Several were written by John D. Harger, son of John Wesley Harger, while he was a soldier in the Civil War. He was a young boy of eighteen when he left and wrote his mother of the sights he saw as he traveled to New Orleans, his life as a soldier and the sickness and suffering of himself and fellow soldiers.

Some excerpts from his letters are as follows:

Camp Buchink, Long Island, Nov. 10

Marched eight miles to camp. 23rd. are coming today with 900 men. We set tents and dress parade before sunset. All we have to eat is sour bread. The bread is so magoty, we cannot eat it. The captain saw the cook. Told him no more ham since we have corn beef and sweet bread. They are firing a salute for General Banks today. Coming down the river, we saw the Great Eastern. It is the largest boat I ever saw. It had steam boilers.

Baton Rouge, Feb. 20, 1863, Co. A 25 Regiment C.V.M.

Today we had a loaf of bread, some salt pork and a little coffee and sugar then we took some muddy water and put it on coals and steep. Many are sick with fever. I am on guard one day and drill the next. A boat came down the river with a flag of truce to exchange prisoners. Another boat came down the river and it came by Vicksburg and it got to Fort Hudson and was taken.

University Hospital, New Orleans, June 23

I don't get along very well. I cannot sleep night and day with pain. Don't think I will ever get well as long as I stay in this country the weather is so damp and wet. When I am in my native land once more, I hope it will leave me. Our living in the hospital is bad. We get salt meat, bread and tea, not fit to drink. I get a pint of milk morning and night. I can get a loaf of bread for five cents. This is all I can write for now.

This past year Harold Lee (John Harger's grandson) renovated the house with care taken to restore and preserve its original colonial beauty.

## HENRY E. KRAUCH

Henry E. Krauch and family live on place now owned by Arthur Olson.

Oliver Case lived here for some years and after his death, his daughter sold the place.

It has the small glass windows and slooping roof on the side instead of the back, and has probably been remodeled.

## EDWARD KREISLER

This house was built in 1799 by Nathaniel Alford.

Isaac Mills had the first post office in Canton in what is now Mr. and Mrs. Kreisler's living room. Isaac Mills married Assenath Merrill and they had a son Merrill Mills.

The house is a large two story house with a two story ell. There were originally five fireplaces with a smoke oven in the basement for beef, hamsetc. There are two fireplaces remaining, one is laid up with soap stone. "A Soap stone fireplace." The windows are of blown glass, small panes, twelve over twelve in good condition.

The immense drilled stone steps are in front of the door, and look as if they would last forever.

## CANTON INN

1950

This house was built by Joseph Dailey in 1808. Elsie Edwards had a tea house there about 1925. It was formerly known as Fancher's Place.

Emory Fancher had a wagon shop, he made and patented wagon springs, also a coiled buggy spring called "Fancher Spring." He tempered the springs in oil. The wagon shop was west of the house.

This house is the large frame house of early type, two front rooms and the usual long kitchen or "keeping room" with the large fireplace and Dutch oven (back of the two front rooms) originally having the small bedroom or "borning room" on one end and the large pantry on the other end.

Edward Dailey, second son of Major Dailey, represented the town in the General Assembly in 1869.

Mr. Dailey with his brothers, succeeded their father for several years in the carriage manufacture. He was elected representative from Canton to the State Legislature in 1858. In 1868 he moved to Terryville. He died in 1881.

## ROBERT CRAIG

Mr. and Mrs. George Gilbert lived here in 1919. They were the parents of Helen Gilbert Lawton. The name on the 1855 map is G. Mills. Mr. and Mrs. Howard Page occupied this house for several years recently moving into their own home. Mr. and Mrs. Robert Craig are the present occupants of the house.

## LESLIE TAYLOR THE 1776 ACRES

This was known as the Woodford Mills place until about 1930. This is one of Canton's old historical places. We find this house was built by Jared Mills in 1774 or 75. He was first pastor of the Church in Suffrage and continued his services for sixteen years. Mrs. Caroline Fenn was one of his descendants and a loyal D.A.R. member until her death.

Doris Bond had a "Tea Room" at the 1776 house about 1936 or 38. Afterward Leslie Taylor acquired the place and owns it.

The house still retains its original lines, a salt box type, and has a long ell added.

The stone chimney still is in the center of the main house with its fireplace and Dutch oven on the ground floor and a fireplace upstairs. There was a built in "smoke house" or compartment in the attic in this chimney until 1941.

The house has the frame pegged together as of yore, and the original clapboards. The old stones in the steps are cut in remarkable size. We can visualize the oxen drawing these large stones on the old "stone boats" to the place where they now are placed. Labor did not daunt those early settlers.

The wide twenty-two inch floor boards have a hue, that only time can give, however, the worn boards have been covered over on the main floor.

The barn is one of, if not the largest and most sturdily built in this town. It is built of solid hand-hewn timbers, mortised with wooden pins. It had hay lofts above the first floor and a large lower basement, where the cows and animals were housed. A carriage house adjoined the barn.

Just where the old cider mill and distillery were situated is hard to tell, but we know there was a still and famed apple brandy was shipped from this "Bonded Warehouse."

We like the old tales of what happened in the many years "long gone," An Inn, a cider mill and distillery, Tea House and Show Shop.

About 1940 the old hay loft was made into an up-to-date stage. The barn partitions have been removed and approximately three hundred people can be seated in the auditorium, the barn floor.

A beautiful old stone chimney has been built, with a fireplace on the main floor and also in the basement.

The carriage house, has been converted into a dwelling house. The grounds have new buildings erected. One is the home of the present owner.

A large pond reflects the landscape by day and the moon by night. The old railroad that passed so near to the house is erased and we hear the whistle of trains no more. We wonder what the changes will be in the fifty years to come.

### JOSEPH ARNOLD

This house is situated on Lovely Street and was bought in 1955 by Joseph Arnold. It was previously owned by Murray Arnold who died in 1954 and previously by Mr. and Mrs. Pinney. On the map of 1869 it is under the name of M. Foote and on the map of 1855 Isaac Mills. The date of 1828 is on a stone in the cellar.

Joseph Arnold has made repairs recently, but this place still retains its old lines of symmetrical beauty.

### JAMES LOWELL

Mr. and Mrs. James Lowell — E. B. Lowell — Burton Higley

Built by Deacon Obed Higley 1788

This is a large frame house, two stories in front and three stories in back. The lower basement was used for kitchen and cook room for farm help. The food was sent up by a dumb waiter to the first floor for the family.

The house has been remodeled but one room still has its antique moldings and panels. An ell was built on and the house partitions changed. The old stone chimney was removed from the upper floors. The base remains in the basement.

Obed Higley's second wife was Phebe Humphrey and they resided at this place. Obed Higley died January 17, 1841 leaving a will that read that Phebe could have the use (as long as she remained his widow) of part of the property and other things including two straw beds with pillows and bolsters, one bedstead and rope, one blanket, one woolen sheet, six old wooden seat chairs, one large Bible, one warming pan, one pair of pillows, two brass kettles, one frying pan, one wash tub, one wooden pail, one tin pail, two baskets and one gridiron. The above Phebe listed and signed that she received the same on February 4, 1841.

The following was copied from a paper in Mrs. B. O. Higley's D.A.R. article, October 8, 1915:

"The Burton Higley House (now James Lowell's) was built in 1788 by Deacon Obed Higley, the first. The remarkable part of this place is the "Obed" part of the name. Deacon Obed Higley, the second, sat under

the old oak and witnessed the raising of the house. He had a son Deacon Lyman Obed, the third, and one grandson, Deacon Burton Obed, the fourth, who remains in the old homestead." (he died in 1919). She added that the name Obed being worn threadbare the last but not the least, the B. Obed Higley's having no children.

Mrs. Lowell also has a letter from a Philadelphia firm dated 1879, looking for a good buy in brandy. The firm had heard there was good brandy in Simsbury and said "send a sample" or if you know it is good "get it," all you can buy. There is good money in it.

An old deed to Alson Higley (his son) left him the "stock of the Talcott Mountain, Turnpike Road Company" that was dated 1849.

Mr. and Mrs. James Lowell are the present owners of this place and it is kept in perfect order, with its large lawn and golf course adjoining. The large barn with a stone fireplace has been changed and is now a place of garden club, flower shows and even a delicious snack place for the hungry golfers. This is another of our well kept historical places.

## MILLS AND WILLIAM LANE — THE MILLS HOMESTEAD

History states that Doctor Solomon Everest, who was a famous surgeon in the Revolutionary War, came to this town in 1796, built and settled here.

This is an article in the Farmington Valley Herald, May 21, 1931 written by Josephine C. Hough. The article was headlined "Canton's First Doctor, Solomon Everest, Had to Treat Witchcraft."

Dr. Everest was born in Salisbury, Conn., April 11th, 1760. He studied medicine with Dr. Everett of Winchester, Conn. He married Amelia Everett of Winchester about the year 1782, she died October 23, 1842, and was buried in the Canton Village cemetery. He first located as a physician in the town of Farmington, now Avon about the year 1782. In 1796, he moved to West Simsbury, now Canton where he resided the remainder of his life. Dr. Everest's name was on the first roll of membership of the Hartford Medical Society. He was a Mason and its first Junior Warden. He was a member of the convention that formed the constitution of the State of Connecticut in 1818. He represented Canton in the General Assembly and the incorporation of the town in 1806 was largely due to his efforts. For twenty years, Dr. Everest officiated as Deacon in the First Congregational Church in Canton. The following incident occurred during Dr. Everest's practice. He was called to attend a young girl who was laboring under the dire malady of witch-craft. Enquiring into the symptoms of the case, it appeared that witches would torment her by violently pinching her arms and limbs so that frequently she would cry out "the witches are pinching me." There were visible marks of violent pinches on her flesh. The doctor in the meantime kept a sharp lookout and came to the con-

clusion that the girl was the author of her trouble. For a remedy, he ordered a large cistern to be filled with water and the sufferer to be immersed when the witches should attack. After several treatments the attacks became less frequent. On retiring, the doctor remarked to the patient that if the water did not effect a cure, he had a large witchiron at home and he would bring it and by heating it red hot and applying to affected parts, he could burn the witches out of her. She listened and came to the conclusion that the doctor's remedy was worse than the disease. The next day his patient was well and without complaint.

Another incident about Dr. Solomon Everest was that he was hurriedly called to a patient who had fallen off a load of hay and struck on his head. When he saw the Doctor he insisted that his neck was broken. Seeing the persistence of the man, the man readily agreed with him that his neck was broken, and charged him twenty dollars, which the man thought exorbitant but the Doctor said "No, I always charge twenty dollars for a broken neck."

After his death in 1822, Doctor Solomon Everest left the Connecticut Congregational Society \$16,000 for the spreading of the Gospel. The fund is still intact and is used to educate ministers. After Mrs. Everest's death, the house was sold to George Mills, 2nd. It descended to his son Washburn Mills then to his daughter Josephine Mills and now owned by her sons, Mills and William Lane. (Four generations in the same family.

The house still retains its original floors of wide hard pine, two old fireplaces and original hardware. The halls are entirely paneled on both floors. The living room has old wall panels. A large wooden wheel is in the second story of the ell which was used to draw water from the well. The house is furnished with beautiful early type furniture which has come down in the family. Many were brought here by Emily Miller Mills, wife to G. M. Mills the second, from the Miller homestead in Avon when she came to Canton as a bride. To these have been added many fine pieces by the present owners as the Mills brothers are collectors and enjoy the fine art and type of antiques. The grounds around this place are spacious and well kept. Beautiful old trees furnish shade for the large lawn.

## LESTER AND HAZEL BRADLEY

Lester Mather is the name on both the 1855 and 1869 maps. Mr. and Mrs. Frank Bradley owned this place for several years.

This beautiful stone structure was built by Dan Case in 1786. We learn that Dan Case was the son of Lieut. Dudley Case who was first proprietor of Hosford Tavern. Dan Case was born in 1761 making him twenty-five years old which was the normal age for house building and family life. He died in 1815 when only fifty-four years old.

This large stone house has been well kept in its original form. A sturdy dwelling that will stand for ages long. It has two stone chimneys, one at each end of the main house and the house contains nine fireplaces, one having a large Dutch oven.

It has a Mansard roof with a crude stone belt extending across the front of the first floor window caps, (or tops) and the three original dormer windows. The gable ends are clapboarded and the steps and door sills are of red stone.

Many of the old type windows consist of six over six on the main floor and twelve over eight on the second floor. Inside the owners have left many of the original features including an old well, stone sink and fireplaces. The corner fireplaces are exceptionally beautiful. The old kitchen in the ell has a flag stone floor and a "built in" iron kettle.

The arched room or hall in the top floor is where the Masonic order met years ago. There is a fireplace at each end of this room.

### MRS. FRED LAWTON

This house was built by Deacon Elisha Case in 1805. It has the name Newell Minor on the 1855 map and W. Lawton on 1869 map.

In the meantime it was owned by George Mills father of Washburn Mills who lived on the Lane place. Fred Lawton's father married Eliza Higley daughter of Obed Higley and went to live in New Haven but soon came to Canton and located on this site. Fred Lawton was born the year the railroad was put through, about 1870 and continued to make it his home. He married Helen Gilbert who lives on the site now.

This is a well constructed two story house with an ell and has been well kept with its wide floor boards, old stone chimney, old blown glass windows, iron hinges, latches etc.

This house has five fireplaces, one large one with the old Dutch oven, and two fireplaces on the second floor.

The frame is put together with wooden pins and the old iron hooks are still in the beams of the ceiling in front of the long fireplace. These hooks are found in few old houses today. They were used to dry meat, apples and many other things. A long rod could be stretched across when needed and the ends slipped into the hooks.

I can remember my grandfather using grandma's clothes basket for a swing for me when a little girl, he tied ropes on the basket, then up and over the hook, and a wonderful swing it was. Of course it was not in this house but in Canton Center. (These old hooks brought back memories.)

Mrs. Lawton said that at one time the Porter School wanted to buy the windows but they preferred to keep the house as it was built. A large china closet is built into the chimney wall extending from the

floor to the ceiling. The old corner cupboards catch ones eye and add to the colonial atmosphere.

I counted twelve over twelve glass in the front windows and nine over nine in the ell, and in back I saw six over six and remarked how unusual it was.

The many acres of land adjoining the large barns in the rear of the house look as if they could certainly tell of thrift in days of yore with lofts full of hay and cattle lowing to be fed.

Mrs. Lawton still enjoys her home and keeps it in good condition.

A little story of Romance is not amiss here. The characters are Eliza Higley and Wells Lawton, father of Fred Lawton.

One day Wells Lawton was passing through the town, he stopped at Eliza's house either for business or a drink, Eliza was working in the flower garden, she was young and pretty so he spoke to her. She blushed and pretended to be picking flowers not just working. She did pick flowers as he talked and presented them to him. That was the beginning of a romance that gave her a home so near her girlhood home in Canton.

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We will retrace our steps and turn to our right on Albany Turnpike and we must visit the site of the tavern near the corner though not a trace of it is now visible.

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Dudley Case settled in Canton in 1742. His house was called the Hosford house which burned in 1874. Mr. Case died in 1792 and Eliphalet Curtis kept the house a few years.

Abram Hosford, for whom the house was named, commenced here as landlord in 1798 and kept the tavern for fifty years. Many tales are told about the happenings at the Inn. This was a famous hostelry and before the railroads was a stopping place for many people. It stood on the Albany to Hartford turnpike, one of the most crowded thoroughfares in the whole country. Its fires went from one years end to the other. Parties were constantly arriving or departing and the scene was one of uninterrupted life and bustle. Coaches drawn by four or six horses regularly drew up at the door; their approach was always heralded by the merry winding of the driver's horn. The man, who fifty years ago would have predicted an end to all this business and bustle by means of an invention then yet to be made, would have been scouted as a lunatic.

Various interesting tales hang around this old place, with more or less foundation in fact. During the War of the Revolution, a French paymaster bearing French gold for paying French troops, then stationed near the Hudson, stopped overnight at this house. He was never

heard of afterward; murdered perhaps for the gold he bore. This murder, doubtless, gave rise to the tradition of a benighted traveler passing through the dark defile in the highway and meeting a flying horseman, dead and headless. Another tradition is of a diamond vendor murdered in the dark pass and his headless body thrown into Cherry Pond (now Secret Lake). True or false, these stories have caused many a person to whip up their horses and go a little faster while passing this ravine. The Inn was reported to have had many new articles after this episode and a worker at the Inn who was not too bright would say, "Whence came all this finery? I'm not to say, I only shook the tree the others gathered the fruit." These days are often called the good old days. Maybe!

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### J. S. O'CONNOR

This place was owned for several years by Raymond and Lena Case both deceased. The house was owned in 1855 by Joseph Dailey a carriage manufacturer and Wellington Case in 1869. When Joseph Dailey and Sons made carriages, they sold many expensive vehicles to rich plantation owners in the South. These chariots as they were called were shipped in parts or pieces and then assembled after arrival.

Mr. O'Connor bought this place recently and is giving it a good going over, in fact the old fireplaces of which there are two are coming to light and are carefully preserved. The keeping room with a Dutch oven will see many more years of usefulness. The old stone chimney in the basement is topped with brick higher up. A door leads into a smoke house where hams and other meats were carefully smoked in this compartment of the chimney.

The house retains its small glass window panes.

The mountain background has been cleared and the terrace wall repaired, also a white picket fence tops the terrace with gates and flower boxes. This house with a lawn and driveway in front is on Albany Turnpike or Route 44 as now designated.

### MISS EVA LENNON

The house on this site has been moved three times. It has been remodeled and fixed over by many people and a veranda has been added. It is difficult to find the dates. It looks as if F. Lincoln owned it on the 1855 map and the 1869 map gives no name yet it shows a house standing there. This frame shows an early date as it is pegged together and is the early type of building. Miss Eva Lennon is the present owner and occupant.

### MRS. ESTELLE WOODFORD

Frank Lincoln who worked with Dailey in the carriage making, lived in this place about 1807. It was sometimes called the Healy place

because a Mr. Healy lived here and worked at the Fancher Wagon Shop across the road.

An old saying is that he always had a cane to walk home with (it might be a filly or a wheel spoke), but he never needed the cane when he returned.

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The maps are confusing around the present store site. There is a store with the name of Hart on one map and Hawley on the other.

There are also other stores marked in the 1855 map. This seems to have been the business center of the town with its stores, Hawks hotel and places of business extending west to the Chapman house which is now the Canton Green Store.

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This being the center of Canton Village let us take a look at the industries and the Green or Common.

## THE BUSINESS CENTER OF CANTON VILLAGE

Copied from the original paper signed by Moses Dyer.

“As it was in my youthful days :

|                           |                                          |
|---------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| Two Tanneries             | One whipping post                        |
| Two Boot and shoe makers  | One Baptist clergyman                    |
| One Brick yard            | One chair maker                          |
| One Flax dressing machine | One plow maker                           |
| Three hotels              | One cooper                               |
| Two Stores                | One weaver                               |
| Two Carriage Makers       | One harness maker                        |
| Three Blacksmiths         | One powder mill owned here               |
| One Hatter                | One axe maker                            |
| One Tin Shop              | Two or three shoe makers for custom work |
| Two Tailors               | One lawyer                               |
| One Marble Worker         | Several enterprising farmers             |
| Two Physicians            | One stocks for criminals                 |
| One good Academy          |                                          |
| One district school       |                                          |

The stores did a large business. Barkhamsted products, thousands of feet of pine and hemlock boards and planks found a ready sale in Farmington and Southington and other towns.

The Farmington Valley pine was of the best quality being easier to work than the Connecticut River pine.

Our Academy was one of the best at that time, pupils coming from Farmington, Westfield and other towns. Several were fitted for college here.

There was not a village in the country that did more business than Canton from 1815 to 1825.

Collinsville began 1826 and soon killed Canton.”

## CHARTER OAK ON CANTON GREEN

The oak on the north side of Canton Green is a grandchild of the Old Charter Oak in Hartford.

The history and story of the Connecticut Charter and Oak, we all know. The original oak blew down in Hartford in the year 1856. Many people visited the scene and it is now marked by a marble monument. Among these people were two men from New Britain, David W. Camp, Principal of the Normal School at that time and Col. Samuel Moore a Civil War veteran. They brought home some acorns. Col. Moore planted two close together and they both grew. He twisted them as they grew together and always showed where they were twisted. Finally the Strand Theater bought and built there so now the Strand Theater of New Britain stands where this twisted Charter Oak once stood. Mr. Camp planted his near Walnut Hill Park in New Britain. These children of the Charter Oak grew acorns and he gave them to different people. The Oak on the Green is from one of them.

Ours was planted with a Flag Day Service in 1918. The plaque was added and unveiled at a special service in October 1939 by Louise Root and Betty Barnes. Mrs. Frederick Hill was in charge. School children took part in this service. The State and United States flags were carried by the children and Lillia Hill told the story of the Charter Oak.

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I can remember seeing people drive home cows from pastures and letting them eat off the grass on the Green before driving them into their barnyards for milking and the same in the morning when they were turned out.

Now in 1950, we have a nice and respectful looking Green, mowed and taken care of properly. The summer of 1954-55 this Green was occupied most of the time, D.A.R. Strawberry festivals, Band Concerts, Auctions and Carnivals. The Ladies Aid also held Fairs, Bazaars and Food Sales.

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## CANTON GREEN STORE

This house was built about 1807. It was used as a store about 1855 and Thomas Chapman lived there in 1869. It was called the Chapman house for a long time. Some of the people who have occupied this house are Levi Hawley, Mr. and Mrs. Trench, Charles Barber and family, Mr. and Mrs. Buckland, Collins Case and probably many more. Mrs. Bissell has an attractive store in this house now.

## BAPTIST CHURCH

In the year 1783 a number of persons in the south part of West Simsbury seceded from the Cherry Brook Society and formed a new

Society, under the name of "Separatists" of which church Rev. James Bacon was the first pastor.

Two years afterwards in 1785 a schism arose among the "Separatists" and about one-half of them embraced the Baptist faith. This was the beginning of the Baptist society at Suffrage Street or Canton Village.

The meeting house was built in 1807 and Rev. Jared Mills was the first settled pastor. The edifice stood on the Village Green. In 1838 it was moved to its present site and remodeled. More about this church can be found under Churches.

## WILLIAM G. ADAMS "ELMSHADE"

Named from the fact that the largest elm in Connecticut stands near the house

William Adams is the present owner. Previous owners were Lillia Hill, Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Hill and Moses Dyer. It was built by Nathaniel Alford in 1784.

The house was used as an Inn in stage coach days. The northwest room on the second floor has stenciled walls. There is an arched ceiling extending over two bedrooms which formerly was one large ballroom. All the old taverns had a tap room. The tap room here was on the west side of the house near the kitchen. There are four fireplaces, also a Dutch oven in the keeping room. Village Masonic Lodge held meetings here. There is a Masonic Tyler's door (a door with a hole in it) leading from the front east room into the front hall. Also loose boards connected with Masonic rites are in the attic. All the rooms have the old paneled walls and old wide board floors with nails made by hand at Old Newgate Prison. There are wide vertical boards from the main floor to the attic. These old boards were uncovered and polished. We find many cupboards inserted around the chimney in the rooms. The old iron latches, hinges, and original locks and keys are still in use.

The present owner William Adams has made many improvements. The old hard wide board floors were polished and are beautiful with old-type braided rugs and carpets.

It may never ring again to the sound of stagecoach horn and tavern surroundings, but it still rings with good hospitality as there is always welcome to friends and people of the community.

Miss Lillia Hill, former owner, spends her summers and many other vacation days at "Elmshade."

## MRS. ANNA REGISH

This house was built in 1804 near Dowds Corner, it being used for a store for many years. It was moved to its present location in 1837 by Pomeroy Higley.

Edmund Hough and wife Susan who was a daughter of Pomeroy Higley lived there in 1869. Howard Bristol, son of Lyman Bristol was born in this house on January 1, 1875. He remarked "he was born over a jail." The house has not changed much. Some of the irons of the old jail are yet in the basement.

Edmund Hough was sheriff about 1874 and knew his outlaws were safe when he placed them in the basement of his home.

Mrs. Susan Hough continued to live there after her husband died, and in 1929 Mrs. Ellen Mills occupied the house and also a doctor. This house is now constructed for two families and is a two story house with front verandas on each floor facing Albany Turnpike and a veranda or porch in the rear. The Regish family have lived here since about 1920 until they recently moved into their new home. Modern homes are in the background with Mt. Hor which is looming overall.

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### ROBERT SMITH

Mr. and Mrs. Smith's house dates back to 1840. On the map of 1855 the name is Green and the 1869 map it is E. Clark.

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The next house is the home of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Kriss which is sometimes called the Pholman place. The name on the 1869 map is M. Watters.

### THE SITE OF THE PHEBE HUMPHREY HOUSE

Phebe Humphrey was born in 1763 in the house that was situated on the old Albany Turnpike, near Suffrage Village.

The house was a large two story house salt-box type, with the "lean to" or sloping roof in back, the typical colonial structure of that time. It had a huge stone chimney in the center with five fireplaces. The long fireplace with the old Dutch oven was in the "keeping room" or kitchen.

This house was built in 1759 and stood stanch and firm for many decades. The picture of this house shows the wide double door in the center with the usual twelve over eight small glass windows on the front of the first story. On the second floor were three windows in front with nine over six glass.

An old tree that was called the "Revolutionary" tree stood a little to one side of the house. The terraced yard shows against the mountains in the background.

Phebe was forty-three years old when the town of Canton was incorporated and thirteen when the Declaration of Independence was signed. Her parents were Samuel and Prudence Mills Humphrey.

The year Phebe was born the whole country was in rebellion against the British government and the times were troublous. Her father "Master Sam" was lame which doubtless prevented him from Military Service. He taught school and was a writer of note. He had instilled into the minds of his children the principles that underlie republican government.

On the day when Phebe was sixteen years old, her father teaching, her mother and the younger children in the berry field, Samuel an older brother in the American army, it so happened that Phebe was alone. Her mother had left bread for Phebe to bake in the old Dutch oven with a warning to "look out for the bread and herself as it had been reported that British soldiers had been seen in another part of the town the night before."

Phebe was watching her bread when she was surprised by two soldiers, one demanding some bread. She refused. As she parleyed with the soldiers, she saw the long iron poker in the fireplace. She snatched the hot poker and swinging it in the air bade them "be gone." The soldiers did not stop long for bread but vanished along the highway.

Phebe not only saved her bread but she won honor for herself and family and taught a lesson in patriotism down through the ages.

The old Dutch oven with the other fireplaces in the big stone chimney stood long after vandals had carried off the rest of the house. Afterward some of the large stones were also taken but when Howard Bristol and family bought this site in 1929, there were many of the old bricks and fireplace stones that they used in their house. In fact all the building material possible was obtained from the place and the mountain in back of their house.

The old cellar wall and basement stones were worked in with more stones from the mountain making the first story to the Bristol house. The frame of the house was taken from timber on the mountain. Also other lumber was cut and sawed to be used as sheathing, floor boards etc.

The old English brick was worked into the fireplace and the original Phebe Humphrey kettle and crane hangs in this fireplace. The front hall and stairs, the stair railings and the trim downstairs are of cedar cut from Phebe's mountain.

Some of the enormous flat stones are worked into the flagging around the kitchen door.

The water comes from the same spring but modern piping instead of the old wooden logs with holes drilled or burned through them. (We kept one of these logs when we dug them up.)

The stone terraces are remade and the old stone walls rebuilt.

I can hear the little birds outside the kitchen door calling "Phebe" "Phebe" "Phebe." The granite boulder on Phebe's grave was taken from her mountain and the inscription on the white slab beside it reads, "My strength and my flesh faileth, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever."

## ROBERT KIMMERLE

The home owned by Robert Kimmerle, son of William Kimmerle, was the site of the old Ned's Brook Creamery. It was built by Asa Case, Sr. about 1788.

James Gladwin made the butter in the old Canton Center Creamery and came here and made butter when the Ned's Brook Creamery began. Henry Sobieski bought it and had it made into a dwelling house for his daughter Wanda. She married William Kimmerle and lived there until her death in 1949, and her husband died there in 1952. Robert and his wife the former Barbara Smith have since bought the house.

The map of 1855 shows that it was the Lead Pipe Mfg. Company and also the Horn Handle Mfg. Company in 1776.

Water power was used for the saw mill situated north of this place. The water in Ned's Brook at this location is clear and cold. The old creameries were always located where they had a supply of good clear cold water for butter making.

## MARGARET DYER

### "THE DYER HOMESTEAD"

Daniel T. Dyer and also his father Daniel Dyer lived here. Miss Margaret Dyer is now the occupant and her sign Margaret's Salted Nuts is well known.

This house was built by Isaac Wilcox in 1789 and sold to Daniel Dyer for his son Zenas when he married. Zenas was the grandfather of Daniel T. Dyer.

It is a large two story house with an attic over the main part. It was one of the famous stage coach hotels on the Albany Turnpike. It retains its old rooms and is kept in good condition. It has the old Dutch oven and fireplaces.

Benjamin Dyer bought over six hundred acres of land around the Dowd place and north. His son Daniel bought the Dyer place in 1810 and gave it to his son Zenas in 1811 as a wedding gift. Zenas started a tavern and in 1821 hung out his sign which is still preserved.

STRANGER'S HOME  
HOLD ON DRIVER  
ZENAS DYER

At the Dyer Inn there were sometimes twenty guests and forty horses at night. Lumber, iron, sheep and hogs were taken over the "Old Line." A large deer trade, often nine two-horse sleds loaded with deer killed in York State stopped here and also loads of butter and cheese. For many years cattle shows were held in the meadows to the west.

Taverns came under the General Court in 1644. In the early days the schoolhouse and the tavern were the only available places where influential men of the town assembled to talk politics or discuss matters of importance. Popular vote usually designated the tavern.

There were twenty taverns between Hartford and New Hartford, a distance of twenty-one miles and all did a flourishing business, but the Dyer Tavern was a favorite with the majority as its fame was known all along the Turnpike. Mrs. Dyer was a famous cook and that added greatly to the patronage.

The volume of business was enormous. When stage coach travel was first opened, there was but one line of stage, known as the "Old Line." The start was made at Albany and Hartford. After the "Old Line" had been running many years a new line was inaugurated, known as the "Opposition Line."

This lead to rivalry and the speed with which the expert drivers ran their horses was terrifying to the travelers.

From the Brown Book, "Isaac Wilcox second son of Ezra Wilcox, Sr. married Deliverance daughter of Ensign Isaac Tuller. He resided on the premises and erected the dwelling house now owned by Zenas Dyer. In the year 1801, he removed to Pompey, State of New York." Zenas Dyer was captain of a military company.

This large house stands on a hill overlooking the meadows to the south where some of Burgoyne's soldiers camped during the Revolutionary War. Many of the soldiers died and were buried in the meadows.

The Dyer house has the old paneling and wide floor boards. It has been in the Dyer family since 1811.

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Now let us go back to the Litchfield Turnpike. Some of the first settlers in Suffrage made their homes near the junction of the Litchfield and Albany Turnpikes. We note William Stone, Dr. Freeman, also Oliver Humphrey, Reuben Humphrey and others. The houses are gone long ago but the sites of the old cellar holes were there recently. There are now modern houses built by later generations. This tract of land extended west and was called the Parsonage Lot.

## JOHN WACHT

This place was formally owned by George Napey who was a farmer. Mrs. Napey lived here for many years after he died. Mrs. Wacht is a niece of Mrs. Napey.

The original settlers on this land were Francis Garrett and sons, Rufus and Thias, who came to West Simsbury in 1746.

The map of 1855 has the name of C. Mather. After this date, W. C. Barber who was a shoemaker lived on these premises.

## WILLIAM T. BISSELL

The first house was built by Capt. Ezekiel Humphrey in 1744 and the second house in 1834 by Col. Decius Humphrey.

Some of the people who lived on this site were Quintal in 1910, Johnson Brothers in 1915, Peabody about 1919 and Nathaniel Jenney in 1935. Dr. Ben-Adam Kasson lived here and for many years it was called the Dr. Kasson place, he was there before 1855 and died in 1888. Dr. Kasson was a wise, self-reliant, heroic man not only in his treatments but in the winter traveling often miles to go to the sick and the dying. He was moderate in his charges — never in his early practice at least, did he charge more than seventy-five cents for the longest drives. Maurice Werner said that Old Dr. Kasson charged fifty cents for a visit up here and picked his medicine on the way (herbs). Dr. Kasson drove his horse hitched to a two-wheeled gig. The horse often browsed or munched the green grass while the doctor was making his calls. His house was struck by lightning and one daughter instantly killed.

On these premises was a building brought from the north end of the town and used as cocoonery at the time of the silk worm fever.

This building was built for a meeting house in the north part of West Simsbury by a group called the "Independent Association." This was probably some sort of dissention in the old parish at Cherry Brook in 1783.

Deacon Elisha Graham was one of the leading spirits in forming this Association. They applied to the General Assembly to be erected into an ecclesiastical society but the petition though passed for several years was never granted.

This building was later moved for a cocoonery to this site but the silk worm venture did not prove a success.

Elias Woodford bought the building and built a dwelling house in Collinsville.

The large frame house with an ell is situated on the old Litchfield Turnpike now the Old Canton Road. The building has been changed some and more rooms built on.

The rooms have been restored and the old panels and mantles put back in place. An old sap house in the rear with the arched stones still there that held the sap pans calls forth a story told me by L. K. Porritt.

## STORY OF THE MAPLES

This story goes something like this:

Back in the early 1800's around 1820 or 1830 a young man probably the grandson of Decius Humphrey who lived on this old Parsonage lot was endowed with some kind of hypnotic power. After his early school life his parents sent him to Albany for a higher education. He came back to the farm for a year or so and decided to go to Texas. Texas was yet under the Spaniards or in the Dominion of Mexico.

Before he left he said, "I'll set a row of trees and if I never come back, they will be a memorial for me." People were tree minded in these years and often set out row after row of trees along the highway and in other places. Maples seem to have been the favorite.

He went to the mountains and gathered his maple trees and very systematically set them out on the side of the highway, Old Litchfield Turnpike.

He did go to Texas and the next his people know of him, he was in trouble.

The story goes, one night at a ball or very select party, the subject come up about hypnotic power, some said that it was all bosh, they did not believe in it, and others joined in with them, however a few others said it was true and could be done. To settle the argument, he said if someone would act as a medium or permit him to exemplify it, he would prove to them that it could be done.

No one seemed inclined to offer but finally a beautiful young lady came forward. She was the daughter of one of the high officials.

He showed them his power and she seemed to be in a trance but before she came out of it, she died.

The father called his officers and informed the young man that he had just so many hours to bring her out of this situation or he would be cast into prison and pay the penalty. The time went by and he was put in prison and finally executed. Later the parents received a package containing his watch and a few articles that had belonged to this young man.

## O. V. MATTHEWS

This house was built by Col. Decius Humphrey in 1808-1809 and is located on the south side of the old Litchfield Turnpike.

We find the name Osborne on both the map of 1855 and 1869. Charles Osborne and his father had a large place of business here.

Their sign read as follows: Manufacturer to dealer in monuments and grave stones, fencing of the latest styles from Italian and American marble, freestone and granite. It was listed as a button factory in later years.

The house was occupied by Carl Judin for some years. The factory or sales place was remodeled and Dr. Gilbert Heublein lived in this house.

This is one of Canton's grand old colonial houses that has been well kept without destroying the antique design. The wood shed has been converted into an attractive guest house.

The frame of this house is put together with the old wooden pegs. The large timbers in the attic show the marks of the axe where they were hewed out. There are three fireplaces, one being on the second floor. The wide floor boards have been well kept and the old iron latches remain on the paneled doors. The large barn which stands close by was made for farm animals but has seen many changes with the years. The large maple trees in front furnish shade and beauty for the place.

#### MRS. ANNA S. JAHN

This house was probably built by Col. Decius Humphrey about 1834. A cooper shop was located here. It is not a large house, only a story and a half high, but is a neat cosy home beside a rippling brook. Perhaps the families residing here did not need the extra large ell that so many fathers built as their families increased in numbers.

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We are now nearing our journey's end.

"Well Betsey, we have had a long hard day but we have enjoyed every minute of it. You get some good home made bread and butter and a pot of apple sauce as quick as you can, and I'll draw a jug of cider. I'm hungry as a bear."

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To the owners of these old houses and to all who have helped me, I express my sincere gratitude.

Many times the dates have conflicted and it is impossible to know all the names and dates from the primitive houses to the more modern ones of 1869.

All of them have been remodeled and fixed over through the years.

I hope the readers will have the kindness to make allowances for all mistakes or correct them in their books.

BERTHA CASE BRISTOL.

## PART II

# Old Houses — Canton Center, North Canton and Breezy Hill

### INTRODUCTION

#### *Oldest houses in Canton Center, North Canton, and Breezy Hill*

When I was a girl, it was my delight to hear my grandmother tell stories of old times. Though repeated over and over again, they never lost their charm. To me they were entertainment as fascinating as any makebelieve, and not until my grandmother was gone did I realize the greater gift she had given me — the ability to see the people, their homes, their everyday doings, as described in those simple tales. One story was of an old woman called Lizy Elkey. She made baskets and often came around peddling them. One day she stopped in, just in time for dinner. That day they had a favorite dish of my grandfather's, lamprey eels. As Lizy passed up her plate for a second helping, my grandfather asked her if she wouldn't like a little of the salt pork, too. Quick as a flash she answered, "I don't eat pork when I can get eels." Her reply became a family by-word.

It is with the hope of linking the past to the present that we have undertaken this work. Over two hundred years have passed since the first settlers came here. Not much remains to remind us of those early days but the houses, and many of them have been changed, but through a study of them you may get a glimpse of the past that we hope will prove rewarding.

The first log cabins were soon replaced with frame buildings, with hand hewed beams and sawed clapboards. The smaller houses had one story with a loft overhead and one window in each gable end. A later development had the roof raised slightly higher to allow low or "eyebrow" windows across the front. This style was called a story and a half, and went into the tax list at a lower rate than the two story house. The next style was the salt box. This was two full stories, but the roof in back cut down across in a long slant to cover a leanto. Two full stories, two rooms deep, was the next development, with an ell at right angles. This was the colonial or Early American style, with the ridge parallel to the road.

Until about 1830 this style was the one most often used. It had a large central chimney, with a small hall and stairway in front, and a fireplace on each of the other three sides. There were two large front rooms, with the space back of them divided into three rooms — a large middle room and a small room at each end. The fireplace in the middle room usually had a brick oven, the earliest being in the back wall of the fireplace. Later ones were built at the side, with a separate flue. Sometimes a fireplace was put in an upstairs room. The attic was large,

and used for storing dried herbs, vegetables, nuts, pop corn, cured meat, and many other things. Often a large carpet loom was built here. Kitchens were large to accommodate the large families and the work that had to be done there. (It is recorded that four of the forefathers had forty sons, thirty-nine of whom grew to manhood and married. In twenty-five of the early families there were two hundred and eighteen children.) Pantries were large, also, and often there were two, the buttery being used to set the pans of milk to let the cream rise, this being the first step in making butter. These pantries have sometimes been changed into bathrooms, while the small bedroom has had partitions removed to make a larger living room. Sleeping rooms were called chambers, the name of the room corresponding to the room underneath, as kitchen chamber, or parlor chamber.

The houses in this town were mostly made of wood, though a few were of brick or stone. Partitions were often of oak plank, with lath nailed over them. The first lath were made of thin boards split from hemlock, then hacked in separate cuts with the grain, and stretched as they were nailed on to make cracks for the plaster to adhere to. Some foundation walls, door sills, and steps were of cut red sandstone, brought probably from quarries in Simsbury. Chimneys and flues were stone, often changing to brick from the attic floor up through the roof. They started in the cellar and were very large at the base to allow for several separate flues. A place to smoke hams and bacon was often built into the chimney, sometimes in the cellar and sometimes upstairs. Up and down saws were in use soon after Canton was settled, but sills and other large beams were hand hewed with a broad axe. Joists were framed into the sills, and wooden pegs of oak held the whole frame together. Plain or elaborate, houses were built to last.

In 1953 the D.A.R. Past Regents Club undertook to gather information about Canton's oldest houses. Some years ago, in 1940, the Phoebe Humphrey Chapter of the N.S.D.A.R. had marked about seventy-five houses with the date of building. Now we have attempted to find additional dates, and some information about the houses and the people who lived in them, hoping that many who live in these houses will be interested in these "facts and fancies" of the bygone days.

Approximate dates can sometimes be determined by the panelling, exposed beams, wide floor boards, split lath, hand forged nails, etc., but it is not an easy job. These words from "Old American Houses" by Henry L. and Ottalie K. Williams well describe it. "Dates are specific things, definite and unequivocal. And ancient houses too often seem more loath to reveal their year of origin than any coy lady on the downhill side of forty."

Although the Georgian type of architecture was being used when the early settlers came here, it was not so suitable for farmhouses. Greek Revival influence is found in several houses built around 1830 and 1840, and that was followed by Victorian, with its dormer windows

and fancy trimmings. Some houses show a mixture of several different periods, as additions or changes were made from time to time.

The section of Canton that it has been my privilege to cover includes houses along the Cherry Brook road from Route 44 to Barkhamsted and Granby lines, a few side roads, Barbertown, and Breezy Hill. I am deeply indebted to all who have so generously helped me. I cannot list them all, but among them are Mrs. Ruth Gracy, Mrs. Hortense French, and Mr. Lewis Mills. I also was greatly helped in 1940 by Mrs. Eugene Case, and largely through her memory of people who used to live in these houses have I been able to make my list of occupants. This long but enjoyable task has brought a deeper understanding and admiration of these early pioneers. Large families and hard work developed a thrift, resourcefulness, and endurance not equalled and not needed nowadays, but with the refinements and luxuries of modern living, may we all hold fast those qualities of honesty, courage, and faith in God that these early ancestors bequeathed to us.

HELEN HUMPHREY SWEETON.

February 17, 1956.

Note: Parenthesis around owner's name indicates the name is on the 1855 map. An italic name shows ownership, but not occupancy.

## CHERRY BROOK ROAD

The Anson W. Bristol, Jr. house is of colonial style, like many many others in town that were built around 1800. It is said that the carpenters who built the Bristol house came there from finishing the Canton Center Church, which would date the house 1815. The ell has the appearance of being older, and may have been added from the original house built by Isaac Tuller who settled here about 1749. The veranda was probably added later.

This house has had some alterations inside, and now accommodates two families, one upstairs and one down.

William Squires, Mrs. Vera Boyd — A. W. Bristol, Jr. — Cyrus Harvey — (Augustus Carrier) — Rufus Tuller — Isaac Tuller.

The house recently the home of Fay E. Downer is built partly of brick and partly of wood. Some years ago the town poor were kept here, and the ell on the south was added to accommodate them. The house and grounds have been much improved in recent years.

Mrs. Daniel Gutman — Fay E. Downer — Howard Edgerton — August Freytag — Edward Edgerton — L. D. Dowd — Richard Wagner — (D. P. Ackart).

The home of Mrs. Hortense French and Miss Ruth Case was enlarged by William Case in 1893. The north part was built in 1835. Mrs. French says that the northwest ell was brought down from the Simeon

Mills' place and added on. There is an old hearth in this part where Dr. Chauncey Griswold made his salve, and it is said that he once spilled a kettle of salve on the hearth that was worth \$500.00.

Ruth Case and Mrs. Hortense French — William Case — Lloyd Sturgeon — Fred Brown — (George Merrill) — Chauncey Griswold — Daniel Lewis.

The exact date of the Stevens' house is not known, but it was probably around 1800. It is of the colonial type, the veranda and room on the north being later additions. Rev. Charles H. Stevens spent several summers in Canton during his college years, and liked the place so well that in the early nineties he bought this farm and made it his home for the rest of his life. Here he carried out his ideas of farming, raising Jersey cows, and planting apple orchards. He was one of the first around here to set out small pine trees in quantity. The large maples around the house were set by him. During these years he preached in Canton Center and in nearby communities.

South of the house and opposite the house where Samuel Leete lived there used to stand an old cooper shop. This was used by Noah Bristol. It was moved later to the north where it is now part of the barn used as a garage.

This house has a fine Crusader door in the south front room and the usual fireplaces. The large one in the dining room that had been closed up before the Stevens' family came was not discovered until the soot pushed out the boards covering it. In cleaning it out they found an old English coin with George the Third stamped on it. The large room on the north was added to accommodate a very high four poster bed and wardrobe that Mrs. Stevens had received from her southern ancestors.

Richard B. Stevens and Clarence Fox — Rev. C. H. Stevens — Anson W. Bristol, Sr. — (Noah R. L. Bristol).

The Delbert Allen house stands on the site of a former one occupied by several Bristol families. It burned down some years ago, and the present house was built by Delbert Allen in 1915.

Delbert Allen — Carl Adams — Lyman Bristol — Philo Bristol — (L. H. Healy).

The house owned by W. S. Kistler is on the 1869 map. At one time some of the men who ran the gristmill at the foot of the lane lived here. The house has had many changes and improvements in the last few years.

Wilson S. Kistler — William B. Andrus — Milton Quick — Harvey Seger — Burton Humphrey — William Reynolds — John Allen — Luke Hadsill — R. Hughes.

The Roswell Bill house, built in 1859, has been remodeled. The north part was a story and a half, and had split lath. The south part was raised and enlarged when Henry Humphrey lived here; the north part

was changed and the porch added by the Roaches. The cow barn burned when Henry Humphrey was in it, and he narrowly escaped with his life. He built the present barn. Down the lane on Cherry Brook there used to be a gristmill, operated by Irving Case at one time.

Roswell W. Bill — William C. Roach — Omar and Alice Humphrey Pouliot — Dea. Henry Humphrey — (Irving Case).

The home of Mrs. Ella W. Crowley and her son Lisle was the site of the home of Serg. Daniel Case, 2nd., who came to the valley in 1747. He built the first gristmill in town near the dam by Mrs. R. C. Bristol's. The present house was built by Titus Case in 1840. West of the house stood an old mill run by a huge water wheel fifty feet in diameter. A part of the building still remains. Calvin Case carried on a large business here and in shops nearby.

The present house shows a later style, having some Georgian features. The cupola is said to have been added after the Civil War. The descendants of Calvin Case lived here, using it as a summer home. The historical cabinet in the church was given in memory of his daughter, Kate Minerva Marsh. There were many shrubs and trees in the yard not common in other dooryards, some of which still remain.

Jeremiah Crowley was a butter maker, working in the first creamery which stood opposite the home of Hewat Davis, and later in the one built in 1893 which stands north of the Crowley home.

Lisle and Mrs. Ella Crowley — Jeremiah Crowley — Sherman Brown — Dwight Porter — Calvin Case, Sr. — Capt. Titus Case — Serg. Daniel Case, 2nd.

(The following lines were given to me by Mrs. Kate Brown Case. They were written by her mother when they lived on this place, and refer to a Hallowe'en prank played on her father.)

Listen, my friends, while I unfold  
A little tale of four boys bold.  
These smart boys planned one moon-  
light night,  
To give their neighbors quite a fright.  
With thread and spike and leather  
string,  
They soon invented "just the thing."  
With stealthy steps they came, and  
well  
Secured it to the front door bell.  
Across the road they quickly sped,  
Carrying one end of the thread.  
They hide behind a neighboring fence,  
And soon to pull the thread commence.  
Tic tac, tic tock, tic tock, tic tacket,  
Was ever such a curious racket!  
They chuckle to themselves in glee,  
"This is rare fun," "Tee hee, tee hee."  
But suddenly a sound they hear  
That fills them with a mighty fear.  
"He's coming, hurry, cut and run,"  
And now begins some different fun.

George quickly hurried o'er the wall,  
Mid rocks and stones he took a fall.  
But still he clung to his oil can  
As swiftly down the street he ran,  
With hat in hand, oft looking back  
To see his pursurer on his track.  
But how fared Howard, Pliny, Ed,  
As up the road they quickly sped?  
A big dog heard the noise, and he  
Barking, soon drove them up a tree.  
And there while clinging to a limb,  
By turns they coaxed and threatened  
him.  
Till he, ashamed of such small game,  
Withdrew, and down the tree they  
came.  
And walking homeward were o'er  
taken  
(And ought to have been soundly  
shaken)  
By him whom they set out to scare.  
But who proved too much for them  
there.

The new house of Mrs. Elizabeth Bristol Wagner replaces the colonial house that stood on the same site for many years. Amos Kursden built the house in 1822 for Luther Barber, who sold it to Hosea Case, an ancestor of Mrs. Wagner. The old house burned to the ground in 1953, causing the death of Mrs. Wagner's brother, Russell Bristol, and her son and husband, Gerald, Jr. and Sr. The sympathetic townspeople raised a fund that was added to from far and near, and the present house was built the next summer (1953), most of the work being done by local people.

North of the Wagner home and across the brook, there used to be a building where powder kegs were made. This was used later as a house, but has been gone for fifty years or more. East of this house there were two dams. The water was used to run the mill which stood west of the Jerry Crowley place. At one time there was a sawmill near one of these dams.

The Carroll Crowley house is said to have been built in 1858 by Hosea Case. He rented it to different people for some years. The story is told that two men, walking home from prayer meeting one evening, saw a bright light in an upstairs window of this house. They rushed in and succeeded in putting out a fire which had all the appearance of being set, as the house was vacant at the time.

Carroll Crowley — George Dewey — Mrs. Kimberly — Adam Brucker — Herbert Sturgeon — Howard Bristol — Willis Case — *Dennis Murphy* — Mrs. Sarah Olds — Beeman — William Case — Herbert Ingalls — *Hosea Case*.

The William Goodhue place, now the home of Emily and Irene Goodhue, is so far undated. It is not the colonial style, having instead the gable end toward the road, and the ell running to the south. In 1873 this place was deeded to the Ecclesiastical Society of Canton Center by Titus Case for a parsonage. Only one minister lived here, however, as the Society decided to sell this place to help pay for building the present parsonage, that property having also come into the possession of the church at about this same time.

Another minister, Rev. Francis Hiram Case, lived here for a time, but not as pastor of the church. Eugene Case, Mrs. Howard Bristol's father, was born here, his father renting part of the house. He remembered Priest Case's wife. When he was three or four years old, he locked Mrs. Case in the hog house, and when he heard her "holler" he ran way up the hill, he was so scared, and stayed there until after noon. When he came back, someone had let her out. One day he put the cat down the well. His folks wondered where the kitty was, and finally saw her down the well.

Emily and Irene Goodhue — William Goodhue — John Allen — William Sperry — Mrs. Azubah Shepard and Mr. and Mrs. Horace

Gridley — Rev. David B. Hubbard — Sidney Case — (Rev. Francis H. Case) — *Titus Case*.

The Walter S. Case house, now occupied by three of his children, Gordon, Byron, and Beatrice, was built by Norman Case about 1830. The house is colonial in type, but has had many changes which alter the lines and change the rooms inside. The ell has been enlarged and raised, the central stone chimney removed, thus making a large hall with an open stairway. A porch has been added on the front. In each of the attic gables there are two small windows, and there is a block trim across the front under the eaves.

Norman Case had a shop back of the present store in which he made wagons and coffins. The water power came from Cherry Brook, flowing through a canal leading from a dam back of the church. One Sunday morning the people in church heard an unusual sound for Sunday, a continued pounding. Later they heard that Mr. Case was making a coffin for his young married daughter, who had died suddenly. Previous to this time an up and down sawmill and shingle mill business had been carried on here, and a carding and fulling mill was here at one time. The barn still standing was a blacksmith shop. A flood in 1870 destroyed the two dams to the north, and they were never rebuilt. One of the shops was moved to the east, and was made into a store with a hall upstairs. Austin and Myron Skinner were the first to open a store and Austin was appointed postmaster. Both store and post office opened in 1875. After several changes in ownership, Walter Case came here in 1893 and ran the store for nearly fifty years. After his death Gordon Case became postmaster, and an addition was made for the post office. The store was sold and is now run by Thomas Leahy.

W. S. Case—George W. Lamphier, Sr.—Austin Skinner—George Case — Norman Case. (These people owned the house, but many others have lived there.)

The Sturgeon house was built by Caleb Case about 1785. His second wife was the widow of Pliny Case, and their first child was born in 1787. He removed to New York state after his wife's death in 1792. This house has had many changes. Mr. Walter Case, when he owned it, had dormer windows put in, and new floors and a porch added. Many different families have lived here, renting from the various owners. Since 1923 it has been the Sturgeon property. Mr. Sturgeon, after his retirement from more active work as a carpenter, carried on an antique and refinishing furniture business in his "Twixt the Hills" shop.

Herbert E. Sturgeon — Rev. James W. Moulton — *Walter S. Case* — Pliny Case — Pliny Case — (Pliny Case) — Caleb Case.

The Parish House of the First Congregational Church, Canton Center, has had an interesting history. It was built by a group of about twenty men to provide a warm place for their families to eat lunch between the services in the unheated church across the way. The room

was on a level with the road and had a fireplace at each end. In 1862 the owners deeded the building to the Ecclesiastical Society "to use for Select Schools and Public Meetings." The town set up voting booths there at election time. In the nineties when the town consolidated some of the one room schools, it was used for the four upper grades, the first four being in the schoolhouse next door.

About 1900 the building was raised and a basement put in, providing space for a kitchen and dining room. Upstairs the entrance was changed from the south front corner to the north, and a stage built across the south end of the room. In 1914 the building was again remodelled, an addition on the east providing space for a stage, with a new and larger kitchen downstairs. A wood furnace was installed to heat the whole building. One more addition has been made, enlarging the kitchen on the south.

Mrs. Herman Melzer's house was built by Alonzo Barber in 1843. He ran a general store in the back part of the house until his death in 1853, and the business was carried on by his family until 1862 when the place was sold to Warren Humphrey, who continued the store, later moving across the street into a building that he had bought and made into a store, post office, and an apartment. Mr. Humphrey had become postmaster after the death of Simeon Mills.

Mrs. Melzer's house shows the Greek Revival influence, with the wide eaves, and moldings. She has some interesting souvenirs of old time thrift. Apparently when the brownstone and marble shafts were placed in the cemetery, the former headstones were removed and taken by the owners to use at home. We find them placed in cellars to keep the butter, milk, etc. cold, and often used in walks, where they were usually laid with the inscriptions down. Mrs. Melzer's walk to the pig sty is laid with such stones.

Mrs. Herman Melzer — Mrs. Elizabeth Robens — Thomas Dunn — William West — Frederick A. Bidwell — Thomas S. Bidwell — Warren Humphrey — (Alonzo Barber).

The William Beckwith house was built in 1812 by Simeon Mills. The house was not quite finished when he and his bride moved in, and it is said she was not too pleased over the delay. Mr. Mills was married three times and there are many of his descendants living around here. He was the first postmaster for Canton Center, appointed in 1841, and he continued until his death in 1867, except for a short period when he was removed for political reasons. The office was in his kitchen, and consisted of a small cupboard divided into niches for letters, the papers being put on the table where the cupboard stood. He went to Collinsville to get the mail, sorted it, and delivered it on his way back to families living along the Star route. Others came to the house for their mail, and had to wait their turn, as "Uncle Sim" allowed no one to "grab." The pay was very small, but he was very faithful in the discharge of his duties, and made up and sorted the mail until the evening of his death,

although he had been unable to drive to Collinsville for a few days previous. (The cupboard used for the mail is in the museum in Collinsville)

William H. Beckwith — Miss Smith — Howard Brown — Lory Bliss — Mrs. Polly Case — Horatio Rust — John Burdick — (Simeon Mills).

The Hector Prud'homme place was first settled by Ephraim Mills, Sr., son of Dea. Joseph Mills, one of the first settlers. Ephraim was active in the church, giving the land to the society for the church and helping to plan the present church building. West of the Mills' place on Indian Hill there was a settlement of friendly Indians. One of them liked to come over the mountain and visit the Mills family. He was very much afraid of their dog, however, so would stop on the side of the hill and call, "Ephraim, Ephraim, is the dog in?" When he was told that the dog was secure he would come down and seat himself by the fireplace. Here he would sit for a long, long time, not saying a word. Once when the children were laughing he said, "Humph, sign of fool, laugh a great deal."

Church services were an all day affair in those days, and some of the people brought their lunch over to Ephraim Mills' house where they could sit by the fire and get warm. One Sunday when they were sitting around the fireplace a big fat ham fell out of the chimney and rolled across the floor. It had been hung in the chimney to smoke. No one said a word for a moment, then someone said, "Looks like Ephraim is a good provider!" Ruth, his daughter, in telling the story used to say she was not so pleased at their laughing when she saw the greasy trail the ham made across her clean sanded floor.

This same Ruth once went to Newgate Prison with a party of young people. When they were ready to go down into the tunnels where the prisoners were kept, no one wanted to go first. Finally she volunteered, saying that the rest must come right behind her. As she neared the bottom of the ladder she could hear and see the prisoners below her. "Oh, do hurry up," she cried, "I'm right amongst the prisoners." "Don't be frightened, Miss, we won't hurt you," said one of the men. This reassured her, and soon the whole party was down in the prison.

One other story that has been handed down is of Ephraim Mills, Jr. and his brother Simeon when they were boys. They were up on the hill back of the house when a violent thunder storm came up. They started running down the hill and Simeon upset a hornets' nest in the bushes. They swarmed out, stinging him madly. Just at the same instant there was a terrific clap of thunder, and Simeon yelled, "Oh Eph, I'm struck, I'm struck!"

The house was built in 1775 with later changes made in 1806.

Hector Prud'homme — Albert E. Carey — Origen Lamphier — Samuel Shepard — Lewis Case — George Lamphier — (Stiles Case, Freeman Case) — Ephraim Mills, Sr.

Paul Johnson's house shows the Greek Revival style of architecture, but has had a large veranda added in place of the original one which was like the one at Mrs. Melzer's. The date of building was not found, but a deed from W. H. Hallock to Simeon Mills in 1827 might describe this lot. It is on the 1869 map.

Paul Johnson — Ethel B. Kenyon — . . . . Ford — Martin Seger — John Pike — George Lamphier, Jr. — Origen Lamphier — Mrs. Miles Case — A. Garrety.

The parsonage is the third house to stand on this site. Dea. Joseph Mills settled here in 1743 with his fifteen year old wife Hannah Adams. They had fourteen children, all of whom grew up and had children of their own before the death of their father. Mr. Mills was the first deacon of the church in Canton Center. His son, Dea. Andrew Mills, was the next to live on the place, removing to Vermont in 1787. It then became the home of Rev. Jeremiah Hallock. Between 1787 and 1813 another house was built on the same site. Following Rev. Hallock's death in 1826 Rev. Jarius Burt bought the house and lot, Rev. Hallock's son, William Homan, keeping the farm, and building a house where Stuart Gillespie now lives.

In 1874 the Burt place came into the possession of the Ecclesiastical Society, being left by Mrs. Linda Hosford for a parsonage. The old house was torn down and the present one built in 1876. Rev. D. B. Hubbard, who had lived a short time in the Goodhue house and in the Burt house, was the first minister to occupy the new parsonage — in 1877. The house has much the same appearance as when built, but has had many modern improvements inside. The old horse barn has made way for a garage, and a driven well replaces the water that used to be piped down under Cherry Brook from a spring up on the hill to the west. When not occupied by a minister, the parsonage was rented to several different families. The following is the list of ministers who have lived here and the Mills names.

Reverends Russell E. Angell — Alvin J. Beachy — Eugene A. Rose — Frank L. Sechrist — Walter Warner — Russell E. Rees — Warner Muir — Herman W. Reynolds — Eugene L. Richards — James W. Moulton — Christopher R. Hamlin — Arthur L. Golder — David B. Lord — Frederick Alvord — David B. Hubbard — (Rev. Jarius Burt) — Rev. Jeremiah Hallock — Dea. Andrew Mills — Dea. Joseph Mills.

The house of Stuart P. Gillespie is of the Greek Revival style, and was built by Rev. Jeremiah Hallock's son, William Homan Hallock, about 1844, on the site of his first house that was burned in 1838. He was town clerk at the time, and many of the town records were burned. Up until 1806 all records were recorded in Simsbury, and many of the ones burned were recorded again by Canton.

The house stands with the gable end to the street instead of the colonial style of the long ridgeboard parallel with the road. It has a

beautifully panelled front door, with a double cross inside and raised panels on the outside. The house has had many alterations during the years.

Stuart P. Gillespie — Harold Edgerton — Ethelbert B. Gillette, Mortimer Bristol, and Gustave Ingraben — George Daggett — William G. Hallock — (William H. Hallock).

Harold W. Humphrey's house was built by Gardner Mills, Sr. about 1810. It was on the site of an earlier house built by his father, Col. Amasa Mills, whose first house stood northeast of William Beckwith's. This is the colonial style. A large veranda across the front and south was removed some years ago. The "little bedroom" has had its partition removed, thus enlarging the living room, and the pantry is now a bathroom. The kitchen has been improved, but otherwise the rooms are about the same as when built. The cat hole is still in the attic door, and two small heart shaped windows are in the upper part of the lower stair door. There are the three fireplaces around the stone chimney, with a brick oven in the living room.

Harold W. Humphrey — William G. Humphrey — Alfred F. Humphrey — Gardner Mills, Jr. — Gardner Mills, Sr. — Col. Amasa Mills.

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## THE STORY OF GRISWOLD'S SALVE

Mrs. Alfred Humphrey's father was Chauncey Griswold, maker of Griswold's Salve, and the last years of his life were spent here in Canton Center. He had built up quite a business making and selling the salve, and when he came to live with the Humphreys, Alfred helped him make it. After Mr. Griswold's death in 1864, Alfred kept on with the business, doing it on shares for Mrs. Griswold. The business was finally sold to the Sisson Drug Co. of Hartford, who continues to make this famous salve.

Here is the story of how C. G. Griswold came to make the salve. One Fourth of July one of his sons was terribly burned by some gunpowder that ignited in his pocket. Doctors were few and far between, but they heard of a man a few miles away that had a salve that was good for burns. They got some of it and were so pleased with its results that Mr. Griswold bought the recipe and started experimenting with it. It had only been made in small quantities when he bought it, and he had much difficulty in trying to make a large amount at one time. He finally succeeded and began to sell it in different towns, carrying samples of the salve in a carpet bag. In the course of time the salve became well known, and orders came from many states. The following lines were sent him by a customer in 1847.

## STREET POETRY

The worst of all among our woes  
Are corns upon our little toes;  
Oh that all who pull the end  
Would become our better friend,  
And make us boots that we could wear,  
Then we should have no corns to pare.  
Try Griswold's Salve at any rate,  
It is the best in any state;  
For corns that ache, or flesh that's  
bruised,  
It is the best you ever used.  
Oh, that men would try it and see  
How soon from pain they would be  
free.

With burns that smart  
I take no part,  
But cure them quick,  
It is no trick.

Why do men treat me as a knave  
When men from trouble I would save?  
The doctors say the salve is good,  
Of course by them it's understood.

Come buy a stick and take it home,  
Then you a wise man will become;  
Your wife will greet you at the door,  
Be sure of this, she'll love you more.

The Dennis Mahoney home was built about 1800 by Jesse Barber. The first house on this place was farther south, and was built in 1738 by Jonathan, one of the four Barber brothers who were among the first settlers. Jesse Barber had a small cobbler's shop north of his house and also a tannery with two large vats for tanning leather. For many years the water for the house came from a spring on the hill to the east, through logs split and grooved and laid with lapping ends.

The first settler here, Jonathan, lost his life in the siege of Louisburg in 1745. His son Bildad inherited the place, but moved away in 1804. The farm was then divided, Gardner Mills buying land to the south, and Serg. Daniel Case to the north. The middle section became the property of Jesse. Since then it has had many owners, and when Mr. Mahoney bought it, it was in a very run down condition. He has rebuilt the ell part entirely, and put the front part into first class condition, preserving the old fireplaces, mantels, the front stairway, and other old time features, but adding modern heating, plumbing and lighting to make it a comfortable and beautiful home.

Dennis Mahoney — Ambrose Norman — Everett Jones — Eugene Case — Herbert S. Case — Joseph Rood — Sidney Case — (Corydon Barber) — Jesse Barber — Bildad Barber — Jonathan Barber.

The house belonging to William F. Elliott was built for Elam Case by his father Serg. Daniel Case. Elam was born in 1772, so the date of the house might have been about 1790. This is a very interesting old house and is being carefully restored by Mr. Elliott. Many of the original floors remain, there are Crusader doors, a gun cupboard, numerous fireplaces, the one upstairs having ELAM cut in the stone at the base. The living room walls are of pine sheathing which was covered for years with wall paper, but is now restored to its original appearance. There are numerous cat holes upstairs and down. Mr. Elliott has built a pool to replace a pond that was once south of the house. This is fed by a brook coming down from the hill through a pine grove that was set out by Benjamin F. Case, who was born in the Elliott house. He built the large house across the street in the eighteen nineties.

William F. Elliott — Henry Jepsen — Lancel Foote — Clarence Snow — Mrs. Marion Case — (Franklin Case) Elam Case.

The S. D. Richardson house is built along colonial lines, but has an added extension on the south to accommodate another family. Samuel A. Richardson lives in this part, his mother, Mrs. S. D. Richardson and her son Danford in the main part. It is said that when the first cook stove was bought, it was set right in the fireplace so the smoke could go up the chimney that way.

Years ago rattlesnakes were sometimes seen in the settlement. Mrs. James Humphrey went up on the hill east of the house one day to get berries. She came home and said she had seen a rattlesnake on the hill. Her family did not believe her. The next time she went up she saw one, killed it, tied her garter around it and dragged it home. Leaving it on the doorstep she went in and asked her folks to come out and see it. They came, and much to their (and her) surprise, found not only the dead one but another which had followed it down to the house.

(North part) Samuel D. Richardson — Samuel Richardson — (James Humphrey, Sr.). (South Part) Samuel A. Richardson — Leslie T. King — Clarence Snow — Edward Edgerton — James Gladwin — George Richardson.

The Selden Brown house burned about fifteen years ago. The present house was built by Gail M. Dodge in 1948.

Gail M. Dodge — Selden Brown — Walter Brown — Amos Hosford — (Benjamin De Lamoine).

The Allerton C. Hickmott place was an old family home of the Footes, the first one here being the son of Capt. John Foote. John Foote, Jr. built this house about 1780. It was well built and has been well preserved.

The Footes were among the prominent families of the town, although the business interests of the later generations were elsewhere. Dea. Lancel Foote was very active in church work, being a deacon for twenty-five years, and he was the first superintendent of the Sunday School, which was organized in 1819. He also filled many town offices and went as representative to the State Legislature. His son, John Howard, loved music, and had a store in New York City where he sold musical instruments. He built a beautiful home across the road, naming it Bel-Air, and using it for a summer home. This house burned to the ground some years ago, and the house that stands there now has had several owners, the present one being Mrs. J. B. Whelan.

North of the Hickmott house and down the hill stood the Foote horse barn. This was sold and made over into a house some time ago, and has since been enlarged and improved by its present owner, George M. Douglass. Across the brook to the west there used to be a meadow,

and in it there is still a small brown stone that marks the grave of one of Dea. Lancel Foote's horses. The inscription reads as follows:

“Billy — The faithful Horse of Dea. Lancel Foote  
Oct. 17, 1879      35 yrs.”

Allerton C. Hickmott — Hubert Foote — Ellen Robinson — (Dea. Lancel Foote) John Foote, Jr.

The Lewellyn P. Forker place was built by John Brown about 1834. This house has had several changes and additions, and is now arranged for three families.

Lewellyn P. Forker — Ethelbert Gillette — (John Brown).

The George Ingraben place was the original Foote home, Capt. John Foote settling here in 1753. His house was about twenty-five rods west of the present house. We do not have the date of the house, but Sherman Brown was born here in 1847. Recently the place has been restored and put into good condition.

Lucian E. Baldwin — Dr. G. Daniel Denton — George Ingraben — August Ingraben — Sherman E. Brown — (William Ely Brown).

The Roy L. Turner home has had some changes since it was built. The place was first settled by Hezekiah Adams in 1749. No one knows if this is the original house, but parts of it look very old. Recently Mr. Turner has removed the veranda on the south. The house runs at a right angle to the road making the rooms a different arrangement from the colonial.

Roy L. Turner — Albert L. Roberts — Capt. Charles Wakely — Albert F. Bidwell — Frederick A. Bidwell — (Albert F. Bidwell) — Hezekiah Adams.

Herbert E. Putnam's house is of colonial design, but has been remodelled. The front veranda has been removed, and some of the giant old elms and maples have had to be taken down. The first name found is Thomas Sugden, in 1802.

Herbert E. Putnam, Jr. — William Millard — Capt. Charles Wakely — . . . . McClellan — Webster Case — Lucian Case — Mason Case — (Marvin Case) Thomas Sugden.

The Leslie T. King place was first settled by Dr. Elisha Graham, who came from Wintonbury, now Bloomfield, in 1753. Mrs. King says that when her grandfather Watson Case came there about 1840 the house was very small. The room at the rear of the front room was called the soap room and had a dirt floor. The cooking was done in the fireplace. The house has been greatly enlarged with additions made at different times until now it is a large, comfortable, well equipped home.

Leslie T. King — Arthur W. Sweeton, Sr. — (Watson Case) — John Spring — Dr. Elisha Graham.

The home of Vivian Guilford is known as Rusthall Kennels. The house has been restored in recent years. The building date is not known, but the first to settle here was Thomas Phelps in 1745. From the records it would seem that his brother Benjamin lived here also. Anson G. Phelps of New York was a grandson of Thomas.

Vivian Guilford — Bruce Lindsay — Clarence Godard — Robert Kerr — Jay Case — Howard Higley — (Richard Case) Thomas Phelps.

Fool's Paradise, the home of Frank J. Reilly, is just north of the North Canton Cemetery. John Moses, one of the earliest settlers, came to this place about 1745. The North burying ground was on his premises, and his two year old daughter Eunice was the first one to be buried there, in 1754.

Frank J. Reilly — John Bravo — Frank Zemaitis — Fred Stoddard — Howard Case — N. Case — (Seymour Moses) — John Moses.

Mrs. Ruth Gracy's house was built by Neri Case. It is listed on the 1869 map as L. Case. This was Lucius Case, Neri's son-in-law. The North Canton post office has been here since 1937 when Mrs. Gracy became post mistress.

Ruth Vining Gracy — John Adams — Eugene Adams — . . . . Lev-anthal — Charles H. Vining — Sylvester Humes — Charles H. Vining — *Edmund Case* — Lucius Case — Neri Case.

The following verses were written by Mrs. Ruth Gracy, and describe what happened at the wedding of Dorothy Bahre and Richard Wright on Christmas Eve, 1939, in the North Canton Methodist Church.

#### THAT NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS

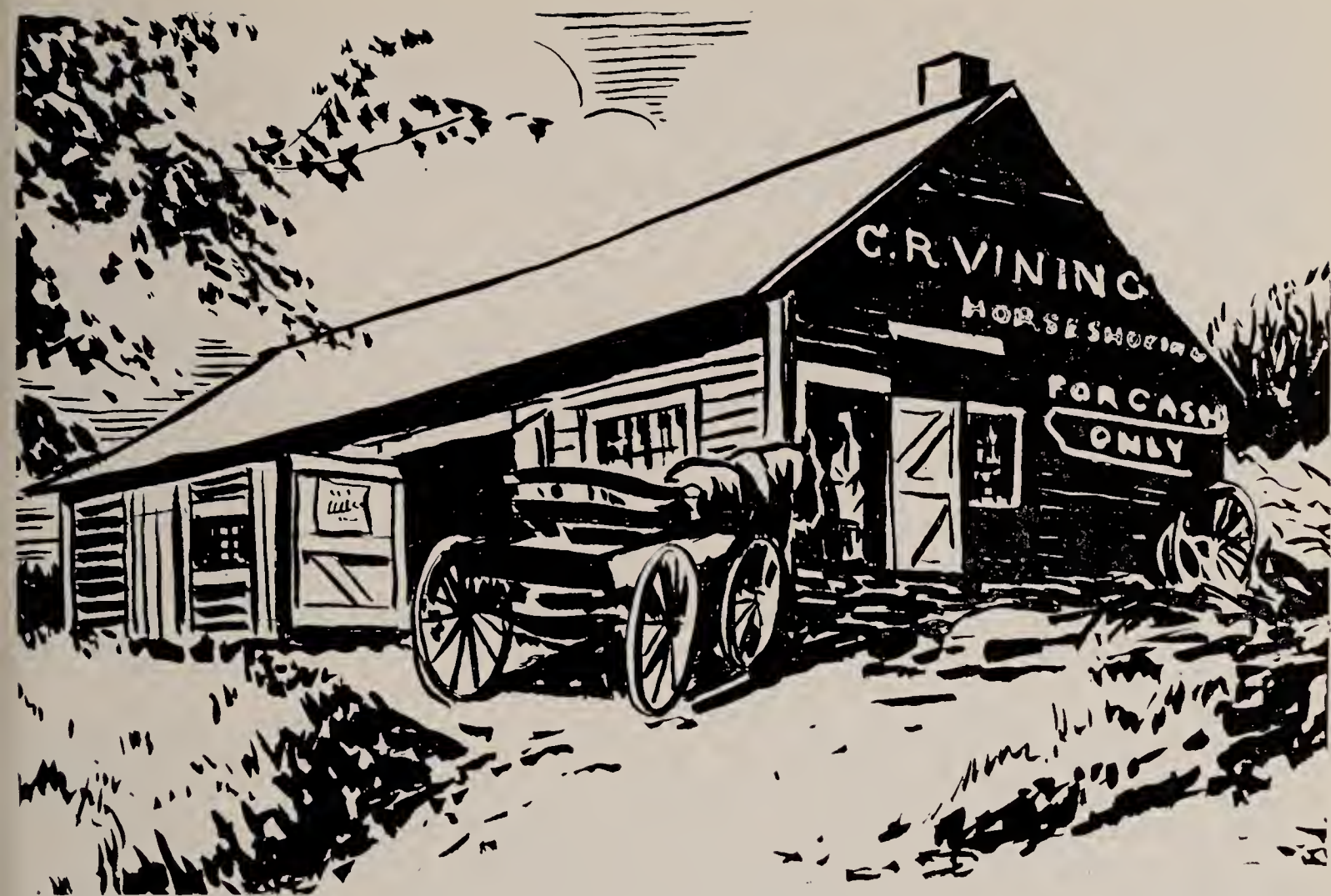
'Twas the night before Christmas in the old meeting house,  
All were eagerly waiting, e'en the tiny church mouse;  
The folks had been ushered to the pews with great care,  
In hopes that the bridegroom soon would be there.  
There were young girls who should have been snug in their beds,  
But visions of bridal veils danced in their heads.  
The organist pealed forth tune after tune,  
Praying under his breath that the bride would come soon,  
When at long last there came to each listening ear  
The wedding march in accents emphatic and clear.  
The bridal folk entered in splendid array,  
The bride bashfully treading her flower-strewn way.  
The colorful gowns and flowers and lace  
Making quaint, pretty picture with the groom in his place.  
The parson stood eagerly waiting them there.  
Handsome, resplendent — his first bridal pair.  
The service he started, and then the sweet song,  
"I love you truly," brought a hush to the throng.  
When a noticeable whisper spread through the air  
From one to the other among the attendants up there.  
An usher departed with haste through the door,  
Then another rushed out, causing wonder the more.  
The singer sang on, but anxiety  
Came to preacher and all as nervously  
The ushers returned and beckoned to men  
Who hastily left with the ushers again.  
Could someone be playing an untimely joke?

But no! The altar was fast filling with smoke!  
 Old Timers well knew that the furnace held a grudge  
 Toward all congregations, and would oft make a smudge;  
 So with much more impatience than fear or alarm,  
 They yielded to orders to scramble from harm.  
 Some even grumbled for the service to resume,  
 But e'en as they did so more smoke filled the room.  
 Dismay came to all when they at last were outside,  
 Gone were all thoughts of the groom and his bride,  
 A nightmare to all seemed Christmas Eve then.  
 A helpless moment, then calls for more men.  
 No need to relate the details of the fight  
 To rescue a church on fire in the night.  
 The aid of the fire trucks and CCC men  
 Restored peace and order and the church once again.  
 The preacher then welcomed to the parsonage so near,  
 All not too frozen the service to hear.  
 Long will be remembered that cold winter night  
 When the wedding was routed, but not put to flight.  
 When the parson is gray and very well versed,  
 He'll smile at the wedding so unlike that rehearsed;  
 And the bride through the years must pause to admire  
 The groom who for her went through water and fire.

Miss Alice Case's house, which she shared for many years with her sister Jennie, is colonial in type but has a large basement to accommodate itself to a side hill. It was built by Ezra Adams who lived at first across the road to the west on the tract of land bought in 1743 of the Indians by his father Lieut. David Adams. Two house dates have been found, 1771 and 1795, the latter being the one given by Alice Case. The front door has a very interesting leaded thistle design, and the rooms have the wide floor boards. The nails used were made in Newgate Prison. An unusual decoration still shows on some of the walls and doors. Starting with a center spot, colored rings have been painted in widening circles until they meet those coming from other centers. Miss Case's father, Loren Case, had a saw and shingle mill on the brook south of the church, and also a grist mill. Wooden molds for buttons were made near this house, and a tannery was nearby.

Alice Case — Loren Case — Noah Case — (Averett Wilcox) — Decius Humphrey — Ezra Adams.

The Tilton House was built by Lieut. William Wilcox in 1750. According to the frame in the attic it looks as if it originally was a salt box house, facing west. When Ruggles Case lived here he built a blacksmith shop a short distance south of the house near the road. Here he carried on his trade for over seventy years, making tools and pieces of hardware as well as shoeing horses and oxen. It was Ruggles Case who made the iron plow points for Chauncey Moses' wood plows, which were made in North Canton. An account of a party held on his eighty-sixth birthday in 1875 states: "He still works some at shoeing horses which are quite gentle and steady, but he is very much bowed over by age, and uses two staves in walking." His grandson, Clarence Vining, learned the trade of him, and after Mr. Case's death in 1881, continued there in the business until he moved down to Canton Center to the Pliny Case shop about 1900.



The North Canton Blacksmith Shop. Built by Ruggles Case about 1820. (Drawn from a photograph by Mrs. Alfred Priddey.)

Arthur V. R. Tilton — E. T. Tilton — Elbert Bond — Frank Wadhams — Ernest Vincent — Henry Case — (Ruggles Case) — Jedidiah Wilcox — Lt. Wm. Wilcox.

The Harlan Reycroft place is the first house on the right on the North Canton to East Hartland road. It has been restored and greatly improved recently. Old wainscoting and sheathing have been uncovered by removing several layers of wall paper and many coats of paint.

Harlan Reycroft — Charles McCarthy — Raymond Pleasant — Gerald Beaudoin — Benjamin Johnson — . . . . Knudson — Hanford Meyer — Oliver Caton — John Case — Jared Case — (I. Watson Graham).

The Ray Morris place was settled by Col. William Wilcox, son of Lieut. Wm. Wilcox, probably near the time of his marriage in 1779. Many changes in the buildings have occurred through the years, farming has been given up, and the house greatly enlarged and improved.

Ray H. Morris — Charles M. Quick — Wilson Case — Chester Case — (Orville Wilcox) — Col. William Wilcox.

The Miles Messenger house is not only old, but very interesting, and has an authentic date. On a beam in the attic are cut the words:

RAISED 1785 JUNE 20 MONDAY

The stone chimney, twelve feet square at the base, and even larger at the first floor level, is brick from the attic floor up. On one side of the

brick chimney is a very small smoke house with a wooden door and iron hooks fastened to a wooden beam at the top. The house is on the same general plan as other Early American houses, but has one feature not found in many in Canton. Two of the fireplace have bake ovens at the back, although one of them has been closed and a brick oven built at the side.

When a stage ran past the door, the house was used as an inn. The front room on the right was the bar room. The ceiling in this room has had the plaster removed, and at one side the joists have been cut back part way. Years ago when Eliphalet Case lived here, he used to walk to Hartford to take lessons on the pipe organ. He had one installed in this room, cutting back the joists to allow room for the pipes. The windows have the small six by eight panes, twelve over twelve. The east door is sheathed inside and panelled on the outside, while the front door has double Crusader crosses. All the doors have the original hinges and latches. Near the house there used to be a cider mill. Two of the huge vats are all that is left of an old time industry.

A white oak from this farm was given recently by Miles Messenger to help rebuild the steeple of the old North Church in Boston. The steeple blew down August 31, 1954 during hurricane Carol, and the new one was rebuilt in 1955.

The Joseph Lewis place is on the 1855 map under the name Wd. Case. It was a small house, but has been enlarged and restored by Mr. Lewis. From the Abiel Brown book, it says that Gamaliel and Simeon Ward settled in 1745 on this place, followed by James McNall, but they probably lived in an earlier house.

Joseph S. Lewis—Clifford Messenger—Louis Messenger—Ansel, Warren, and Julia Ann Case—(Widow Case)—James McNall—Gamaliel and Simeon Ward.

The James Augur place is of a later date than the colonial, the gable facing the road. This house has been remodelled into an attractive modern home by the Augurs. It was built in 1829 by Ambrose Case.

James M. Augur—Gus Olson—. . . . Streeter—Leventhal—Rochette—Birdsey Case—Emerson Case—(Ambrose Case).

The Arthur Langer place, now occupied by his sons Oswald and Richard, has been kept as a farm throughout the years. A clipping from one of Levi Case's news items of 1878 reads thus: "The famous Anson Case farm in North Canton has been purchased by Merton Goddard for \$3,000.00. 120 acres with good buildings. Quantities of apples. Situated on boundary lines, part being in Barkhamsted, Granby, and Canton." Benoni Moses settled on this farm in 1744. About a mile east of the Langer house are traces where a cabin and barn stood. Woods have grown up around the spot.

Arthur Langer—Kavelier, and Mayeroff—Homer de Lavanway—Merton Goddard—(Anson Case)—Darius Case—Benoni Moses.

## CASE STREET.

The Theodore Kyle place was known for years as the Matson place. It is on the 1869 map as J. Matson. This house has been restored to good condition and is the summer home of the Kyles.

Theodore C. Kyle — Elmer Warriner — George Matson — J. W. Matson.

The house now owned by Mrs. Harold J. House is colonial style. The corner posts are exposed, and there are cross beams in the ceiling. The brick oven has fine wrought iron hinges on the door. Chester Case lived here before going to the Ray Morris place. Daniel Graham settled here in 1756.

Mrs. H. J. House — Meyer Widam — . . . . King — Henry Ruick — Meyer — (Chester Case) — Daniel Graham.



THE EUGENE DIONNE HOUSE, BUILT IN 1748

The Eugene Dionne house has been remodelled but still retains its old time charm. Removal of partitions has made possible a large living room with windows facing east, west, and south. Josiah Clarke settled here about 1748.

Eugene Dionne — Michael Bilecki — *Beckwith* — Hyman Smith — Berton Case — Thompson — Robert Wilcox — (B. Wilcox) — Josiah Clarke.

## WEST SIMSBURY ROAD

The Jennison homestead of colonial style is the first house beyond the corner on the North Canton-West Simsbury road. Back of the main house there used to be another house that was connected with the one in front. These were separated by Mr. Diehms, and the part in the rear was later moved away to another spot on the place. Mr. Diehms used the main house as an antique shop. The old well curb still stands in the yard. Years ago a small building joined to the main house on the west was used by Gen. Ezra Adams and his George Adams as a store, and when George's brother Oliver was appointed postmaster in 1842, the office was in this building. When the post office building was removed in 1906, the mail was kept in the west room of the main house. Mrs. Mary Adams was post mistress from 1923 to 1937. The first piano in town was bought by Gen. Ezra Adams for his daughter Mary in 1830. It is now in the museum in Collinsville. David Adams, Jr. is the first recorded owner of this place. He was born in 1740. In the early days most of the houses were built when a man married, and many of them married when about twenty years old. That might date the first house about 1760. The house was a tavern in stagecoach days when the stage came from Hartford to North Canton and on to Barkhamsted and Hartland. There was a large ballroom on the second floor. Gen. Ezra Adams carried on a business, making boots, saddles, and harnesses. In restoring the house, the Jennisons found evidence that a gambrel roof had been changed to its present form, with several feet added to the house, both front and rear. An old Connecticut penny dated 1771 was found in the walls.

Whitney Jennison — Geoffrey Baker — Louis Diehms — Henry Adams, Sr. — (George and Oliver Adams) — Gen. Ezra Adams — David Adams, Jr.

The Kelsey house is also very interesting, having all the signs of age but without a known date. The front door is divided vertically in the center, closing with a wooden bar. Until recently an old stone sink, with a carefully shaped spout that conducted the waste water outside the house, stood in the "sink room." On the north west side of the house there was a small building until a few years ago that had been the office of Dr. Weed. It had shelves along the side, and hand split lath. Dr. Weed was the first postmaster appointed for North Canton. He began in 1826, and may have used the building for post office as well as medicine.

Luman P. Kelsey — Henry Adams, Jr. — William Goodhue — (Everett Case) — Dr. Benjamin Weed.

The first settler on the Henry Evonsion place was Capt. Darius Moses whose wife Sarah was a daughter of Lieut. David Adams. The first house was probably built about 1778. A new one replaced it about 1880, built by Stanley Weed. Some years ago this house burned, and the present house was built by the Evonsions in 1925.

Henry Evonsion — Carl Evonsion — William Goodhue — James Weed — Stanley Weed — Capt. Darius Moses.

## WEST ROAD

The home of Mortimer R. Bristol, a little north of Joseph Bouchard's on the other side of the road, was the Center District schoolhouse from 1849 to 1942, when the Cherry Brook School opened. Mr. Bristol bought the property and remodelled the building into a five room house.

Center (North Center or Sisson) District School — Mortimer R. Bristol.

Hewat Davis' home was built by Loin Humphrey in 1797. Colonial in type, it has the large stone chimney with three fireplaces and a front hall surrounding it. The narrow hall with wide outside door necessitated a door in the southwest room, sometimes called a funeral door. The roof extending over the eighty foot ell covers on the east a part that was a small house, perhaps built before the main part. There was an old well southeast of this part.

Traces of stencilled walls have been found in many of the rooms, old timers saying that the man who did the stencilling around this community boarded here. Ornamenting the plastered walls with stencilling was introduced about 1830. One room upstairs has the original design, with several different motifs in red and green. The three fireplaces have cupboards over them, sometimes called maple sugar cupboards and by some the "parson's cupboard." There is an arched brick oven with a charred wooden door beside one fireplace. It is said that to get the dome or arched effect, a mound of wet sand was used and the brick laid over it. Through the years the house has had many changes, the six by eight panes are gone, inside doors added, partitions removed, the narrow front veranda removed, a wide porch added to the east, and the ell part much changed. The Davises have done a great deal, removing much of the paint on woodwork and floors, and landscaping the grounds. The tulip tree in the front yard was planted by the Sweetons about 1930.

Across the road from this place is the site of the first creamery in town, built in 1878. In 1882 a house was built for the manager, the cellar hole still can be seen. When the new creamery in the Center was built, this house was moved across the valley, and is now the home of Howard Edgerton.

Hewat Davis — Arthur W. Sweeton — Howard Bristol — August Freytag — Amos Spencer — (Warren Humphrey) Loin Humphrey.

A story is told of a man who used to work for Warren Humphrey. It was the custom to make up a barrel of boiled cider applesauce every year and freeze it up for winter use. This man, Mike Lockland, got

tired of having to pare apples every night, and determined to get even with Mrs. Humphrey, so he caught a large rat and laid it on top of the sauce. When Mrs. Humphrey found it she decided she did not want any more apple sauce, so Mike scraped off the top, and feasted on boiled cider applesauce for a long time.

Mrs. Humphrey did not like her husband to smoke in the house, so hearsay has it that he built a small carriage house across the road and there he smoked in comfort.

The next farm above on the west side of the road belongs now to R. G. Pratt. The house was built in 1867 by Giles Sisson, who ran the farm, a sawmill up by the bridges to the north, and a cider mill which stood below the bank south of the house. Traces of the canal can still be seen that led from a dam on Cherry Brook to the sawmill. Thomas Barber was the first settler here, building his house farther west of the present one in 1738.

Another story about Mike Lockland includes Mr. Sisson. Mike was fond of the cider brandy which Mr. Sisson distilled. One day Mr. Sisson agreed to give Mike some if he would catch him a good big trout. Mike caught the fish and brought it up. He got the brandy, but when Mr. Sisson dressed the fish, he found it weighted with shot, which rolled all over the floor.

Rodney G. Pratt — *Dr. A. C. Unsworth* — Otto Freeland — Earl Young — George Snow — Arthur Sisson — Giles Sisson — (S. H. Fowler) — Hosea Case, Jr. — Thomas Barber.

Across the two sawmill bridges and up the hill on the left is the home of Dr. Paul Phelps. The first house here was the home of Selden H. Brown, son of Abiel and grandson of Capt. John Brown. His house was burned on a "dreadful cold night" in January, 1857, and though they waked from their sleep in time to save the nine children, they lost much of their clothing and furniture. Mr. Brown was at the time a partner in the sawmill nearby, so if he rebuilt right away, it would date the present house about 1860. Dr. Phelps has greatly improved the house and grounds.

Dr. Paul Phelps — Wallace Dean — Margaret Daniels — Harvey Seger — Theodore and George Robertson — George Brown — (Selden Brown).

The Bruce Lindsay house dates back to Revolutionary times. It replaced a log cabin built farther west in 1755. Capt. John Brown built the present house in 1776, and left with his company for New York about the time the Declaration of Independence was signed. He died soon after that. His son Abiel, who wrote the "Genealogical Sketches of the Early Settlers of West Simsbury," was born a short time after his father's departure with his company of Minute Men. Abiel was the youngest of eleven children.

A gravestone was erected in memory of Capt. John Brown in the lot across from the house. This stone was later taken by his grandson, John Brown of Harper's Ferry, to his home in North Elba, N. Y. A marble monument had been erected in the Canton Cemetery for Capt. John Brown. John Brown, who died in his attempt to free the slaves, was buried after his execution near his home, a lonely spot in North Elba, and his grave is marked with the same stone that also bears his grandfather's name.

Bruce Lindsay — Stanley R. Eddy — Margaret Daniels — Walter Wilder — Lora Wilder — Elizur Brown — (Abiel Brown) — Hannah Owen Brown — Capt. John Brown.

## BARBOURTOWN ROAD

Thomas M. Perry's home, known locally as the "stone house," was built in 1843 by two brothers, Volney and Linus Barber. The stone for its construction was quarried north of the barns. This farm was settled by Samuel Barber, his cabin standing farther west near the brook. Samuel was one of four brothers, coming with their widowed mother from Simsbury in 1738. Thomas settled on the Giles Sisson place, Jonathan near Dennis Mahoney's, and John where Russell Richardson now is. Dr. Samuel, who got his title from his skill in using roots and herbs, was a noted hunter. His wife's monument is the oldest in town, bearing the date 1752. She was the mother of seven sons, and the second wife had four sons and three daughters. Giles, a son, inherited the farm, and then it passed to his sons, Volney and Linus. Linus was a miller and was noted for his honesty. It was he who started the project of setting out shade trees along the main street in Canton Center. They are old trees now, and some are gone. Most of them were maples and elms, but there were white pines along by the cemetery which were cut in 1930 when the road was widened.

Thomas M. Perry — George W. Lamphier, Jr. and Sr. — (Norton Case, II) — Volney Barber — Giles Barber — Samuel Barber.

The Webster house is an old Barber place. The original house, across the road, was built by Elijah, son of Samuel. He built the present one in 1800. It is colonial in type, was raised higher by Elijah's son Daniel, and the ell to the east was added when Daniel Hiram lived there. Roy C. Webster bought the place in 1926 and restored it, making a comfortable home with modern improvements, but not destroying its old time attractiveness. D. Hiram Barber in his early life was one of the "Yankee Peddlers" who went south winters with their wares.

About 1831 a new industry was developed in Connecticut — raising silk worms for raw silk. To feed the worms, mulberry trees, *morus multicaulis*, were set out, and "cocoeneries" were built to house the worms. Such a house was built on this place on the site of the Bouchard house. Some raw silk was obtained, but before the industry had grown

very much a disease struck the mulberry trees about 1844, causing the experiment in Connecticut to fail. The silkworm house on this place was replaced by a barn, which was later made into the very attractive home of Joseph Bouchard.

Mrs. Roy C. Webster — Samuel Glover — Robert H. Thompson — Anna B. Case — William Peloubet — Daniel Hiram Barber — (Daniel Barber) Elijah Barber.

Russell Richardson's house stands where John Barber settled in 1740. The original log cabin was replaced by a frame house about 1770. The present house was built by Russell Richardson in 1939. Years ago there used to be a still on this place. The water to run it came from a well on the Mills' place, and was brought down to the still by a pipe made of cedar logs bored out and fastened together. John Barber's son Jonathan inherited the place, and when his daughter Linda married Uriah Hosford, Jonathan gave them land for their farm. Several new homes have been built in recent years on the John Barber farm.

Russell Richardson — Stanley Rodgers — Howard Rodgers — Treat Lambert — (L. Foot) — Jonathan Barber — John Barber.

The Irwin Mills place was settled by Uriah Hosford who built a story and a half house in 1821. This was raised by him in 1850 to two full stories, and in 1891 Dea. Archibald Mills removed the large stone chimney and fireplaces, and ten years later added on a photograph studio for his son Lewis. This room was changed to a kitchen when Irwin, another son, married, thus making room for two families.

Mrs. Irwin Mills — Dea. Archibald Mills — (Dea. Uriah Hosford).

The home of Clifford Seger was built in 1775 by Reuben Barber, son of John Barber. In 1820 it was extensively remodelled and repaired by Loin Humphrey for his son Loin Harmon, who lived there all his married life.

Reuben Barber was in the Revolution, and was paid for his services with a worthless Continental \$50.00 bill. It is said he used it to light his pipe. It was Reuben Barber who gave the land for the Canton Center Cemetery, and he was the first one to be buried there, in 1825.

This house still has the stone central chimney, with three fireplaces on the first floor and two in the basement, with a bake oven in the back of one. Sadosa Barber lived in the basement while his house was being built, and others have lived there. When this house was being repaired, Sadosa Barber quarried the stone and built the outside stone stairway.

Clifford Seger — George Seger — Joseph Smith — Edward Staats — William Weingarth — Adolph Rehbein — (Loin Harmon Humphrey) — Reuben Barber.

The house now occupied by James G. Trainer was built by Joseph Messenger, 3rd in 1762. It has a very pleasant location under the hill,

but looking down the valley. It has been much improved in recent years. At one time it was unoccupied, and Gaylord Barbour stored various kinds of vegetables in the rooms. A group of young men some fifty or sixty years ago started an orchestra. They met in this empty house to practice. The instruments were clarinet, violin, flute, cornet, bass viol, and organ. For some time they played for dances, and also played for Sunday morning church services.

James G. Trainer — *Dr. A. C. Unsworth* — Herbert Richardson — Charles Messenger — George Richardson — *Loin H. Humphrey*, John Millard — Dea. Theophilus Humphrey — Joseph Messenger, 3rd.

The Dr. Arthur C. Unsworth house was built in 1839 by Alson Barber to replace one built for him at the time of his marriage by his father, Reuben Barber. Alson said the 1839 house was built at the "great cost of \$600.00 plus salt pork and hard cider." His son Gaylord built new modern barns in the eighteen seventies, when he was running the farm. The house has had many changes and additions made by Dr. Unsworth, and the grounds landscaped.

The first one to settle on this property was William Taylor, who came from Middletown about 1756. He died in 1777 of smallpox, and was buried near the home of his son John, who lived up on the Mulcundry road — northwest of the present Simpson place.

Dr. A. C. Unsworth — Andrew Nissen — Herbert Richardson — George Strong — George Richardson — Gaylord Barber — (Alson Barber) — Reuben Barber.

The place now occupied by Henry Chapin is also a Barber home. The ell is part of the original house built in 1803 by Reuben Barber for his son Sadosa. This first house stood in the garden to the south, and had a large spring in the cellar. In 1856 Sadosa moved the present ell, adding to it the main part. The old Kimberly Line as it was originally would have passed through this house, but in 1762 the eastern tier of lots in New Hartford was annexed to West Simsbury (now Canton) thus moving the Litchfield County line farther west. As was the custom when building, Sadosa paid his help with salt pork and other farm produce. This house has been modernized, although the partitions remain about the same. A large veranda has been added across the front. George Barber once told me that his aunts set out the two white pines in front of the house, which would make them well over one hundred years old. The tamarack tree across the road was brought down from Blandford in the back of the buggy when Henry M. Barber and his bride were returning from their wedding. This place has always been in the Barber family.

Henry Chapin — George Barbour — (Henry Martin Barber and Sadosa Barber).

The Kent B. Gillette house was built in 1851 by Henry P. Lane, who married Lucy, a daughter of Henry Barber. The land was sold to him from the Henry Barber farm.

Kent B. Gillette — Francis A. Gillette — (Henry P. Lane).



#### THE F. MORGAN COWLES HOUSE

Two dates found — 1762 and 1747

The summer home of F. Morgan Cowles, Jr. is another Barber homestead. Moses Gaines, who had married Lucy, a daughter of Serg. Thomas Barber, settled here in 1762. He sold it to John Barber, Jr. in 1775. Henry Barber bought it in 1819 and raised it to its present two stories in 1822. This house has always been painted red. One room shows stencilling with peacocks as one of the motifs. The house has been carefully restored by Mr. Cowles. Sylvester Barbour who was born here, gives a house date of 1747.

F. Morgan Cowles, Jr. — Kent B. Gillette — Mary A. Gillette — Levi D. Gillette — (Edward P. Barber, Henry Barber) — John Barber, Jr. — Moses Gaines.

Hubert Harder's house was built in 1845 for Horace Gridley and his wife, Chestina, by her father, Levi Barber. He spent the last years of his life with them. Mr. Harder has improved the place and made it his year round home.

Hubert Harder — Fred Steed — Sarah Kilbourn — George Carrier — Henry Grant — Eugenie Jeanfavire — George Roberts — William Dowd — *Greenwoods Co.* — (Horace Gridley).

The "Bridal Tower," now owned by Everett Eaton, has a long history. It was built in 1779 by Abraham Barber, a son of Serg. Thomas Barber. It is much the same as when built. This has the old style of small houses of two front rooms with the chimney between, and a fireplace in each room. At one time two brothers, Samuel and Ed Merrells, lived here. They were Scotch, and used to sit on a large rock in the dooryard summer evenings and play on their bagpipes. The farm had one hundred acres, and it was said that Mrs. Merrells grew very bent over from carrying stones on her hip to help clear the land. At one time a baby was left on this doorstep, and was brought up to manhood, later taking care of his foster mother until she died. This house received its romantic name in 1933, when Mr. and Mrs. R. C. Webster's daughter Miriam and her husband, G. Roger Newkirk, spent their honeymoon here.

*Everett P. Eaton — Muriel Geissler — Roy C. Webster — Howard Allen — Sheldon Spencer — John Allen — Henry P. Lane — William Dowd — (Samuel Merrells) — William Barber — Luman Barber — Abraham Barber.* (For some years this place was in the hands of real estate dealers, whose names are not given.)

#### DOYLE ROAD

The Larry Doyle place consists of about twenty-five acres. The house was built by Col. Spaulding Barber, Jr. in 1845. It apparently replaced a house that is marked on the '55 map as Harmon Messenger. Like many others it was built of hand hewn timbers, and heavy rafters, without a square or level. The son, Albert lived here until his death in 1910, leaving his place to Watson Root for caring for him in his old age.

*Dr. Norman J. Barker — Larry Doyle — Robert Skilton — . . . . Ramsey — Watson Root — Albert Barber — Col. Spaulding Barber, Jr.*

#### WRIGHT ROAD

The Howard Roberts place was built by Alvin Bacon about 1825. Timbers of different kinds of wood cut on the place were used, some of them having been used in an older house. A Joseph Bacon settled on the road below Everett Hanson's in 1772, but moved out of the state in 1806.

Mr. Howard Roberts did a great deal to improve the house and grounds while he lived here. His widow now occupies it.

Howard Roberts — Arthur J. Roberts — Robert Kerr — (Alvin Bacon).

Richard Wright lives on the site of the Newell Messenger place, originally settled by Joseph Messenger in 1742. There were other Messenger places on this road, all are gone now.

Richard Wright — Louis Messenger — Walter Humphrey — . . . .  
Pond — (Newell Messenger).

The Lee C. Fielden house is another that has recently been restored. It was apparently built after the fireplace period, and was originally a Bacon place, built by John, Alvin Bacon's son.

Lee C. Fielden — Edward F. Killian — *Leslie I. Taylor* — Howard Allen — Harvey Messenger — John Bacon.

Kenneth Chapin owns the house that was formerly the Root home. It was built by Henry Root about 1848. The Kimberly Line, Litchfield-Hartford County line, used to go across this land.

Kenneth Chapin — Clayton and Nettie Root — Watson Root — Wilbur Root — (Henry Root).

### BUNKER HILL ROAD

Nis Nissen's house was built by Nelson J. Church in 1861. It was built of hewn timber but has no fireplaces.

Nis Nissen — Adam Brucker — Newton A. Hart — Elijah Church — Nelson J. Church.

The Frank Savick place was built by Abraham Barber in 1764. There are hand hewn chestnut timbers, and the corner posts are uncovered. The brick oven is still there, although there is a modern kitchen. Mr. Savick replaced the old barn with an up-to-date one a few years ago. The yard with its stone paths, arbor, and fruit trees, has an old time charm not often found. The house stands on high ground overlooking the Cherry Brook valley.

Frank Savick — Agata Maskaitis — John Winner — Louise Hanson — *Adam Brucker* — Timothy Potter — Newton Hart — Elijah Church — (Martin Barber) Michael Barber — Abraham Barber.

### INDIAN HILL ROAD

The first house on the W. R. Wright place was farther west across the road. This place was settled by Jonathan Merrell, 2nd who was born in 1734. The present house has been remodelled into a modern home. An old time well sweep is in the yard. The well, long covered, was found by Mr. Wright when digging a pipe line.

W. R. Wright — William E. Reynolds — Arnold Reynolds — (Norman Nelson Bidwell) — Norman Bidwell — Jonathan Merrell, 2nd.

Arthur Cyr lives on the place now owned by Mrs. Gilbert. It was long known as the Seger place. It is said that at one time bricks were made across the road to the north.

*Alice Holt Gilbert* — Arthur Cyr — Richard Ditters — Albert Seger — Martin Seger — L. Barber — (E. C. Goodwin).

The Hess home is an old style farmhouse, the back part probably older than the front. Dea. Benjamin Mills, born in 1738, lived here most of his married life. He was the father of thirteen children. He was a captain in the Revolutionary War, but received nothing for his services. He was loved for his devotion to the church, and when he became very deaf in his later years, Rev. Hallock allowed him to stand beside him in the high pulpit, so that he could hear the prayer. One date given for the house is 1755. A date found on a board says 1774. The house has been quite changed, sheds and barns removed, and the grounds improved.

The following newspaper clipping refers to a former occupant. "Capt. Alanson Merrell was extensively engaged in getting out timber, and was known as a very thorough road builder and repairer. At the time of Pres. Jackson's visit to Hartford in 1833, Capt. Merrell commanded the New Hartford Grenadiers, one of the best appearing companies on that important occasion."

Richard A. Hess — A. W. Spaulding — E. C. Knapp — *John Braislin* — John Corcoran — Patrick Corcoran — (Alanson Merrell) — Dea. Benjamin Mills.

The house now owned by Mrs. Mary Hart Conklin is the second to be built on this place. The first was built about 1752 by William Merrell, Sr., on land bought from the Indians, and it stood farther to the west. He later built the brick house for his son, probably about 1781. The Merrell family occupied the place for about one hundred years. After Daniel Merrell died, Mrs. Merrell sold the farm. Her son Selah was then in his teens. He became a minister, but later became much interested in Palestine, and spent many years exploring and conducting tours of the Holy Land. In 1881 he was appointed U. S. Consul to Jerusalem.

When the town owned the farm, the town poor were kept here, William Wells being the superintendent. When other arrangements made for the poor, Mr. Wells bought the farm. The house at that time had a long wooden ell to the west. The main part was covered with woodbine. Below the driveway was an enclosed garden, planted with trees and shrubs, and having a brick smokehouse in the center. The front door stone block and window stones were cut and brought down from the Whiting place (now Simpson's). Down cellar there was an old stone cupboard near the chimney. The old barns, ell, and smokehouse are all gone, the house has been put in good condition for modern living, and the grounds made very attractive.

When Lizzie Wells, Mr. Wells' daughter, lived there, Dr. Merrell used to come to see the old place whenever he was in this country. One day he came when she had a cousin visiting her. As he sat on the edge of her kitchen table, a pan of crullers on one side of him and a pan of ginger cookies on the other, her cousin came in, and was introduced. Later in the day two ladies drove in and were introduced as Clara

Louise Kellogg Strakosch and Ella Wheeler Wilcox. The cousin was quite impressed by Lizzie's callers, a consul, a prima donna, and a poet. The ladies had come for plums, and wanted to go over huckleberrying in the pasture. Lizzie of course told them to go and pick all they wanted, and they went off, carrying china pitchers they had brought to pick in.

When Dr. Merrell was a boy, his grandmother would sometimes ask him to get her a basket of chips. He said he didn't always bother to go under the shed to get dry ones, but would pick up wet ones outside. "And to think," said Lizzie, "that you grew up to be a minister!" His sisters were quite a bit older than he, and his coming was quite a surprise to the neighbors. One woman used to say that his mother went down cellar after potatoes and brought him up in the pan. On one of Dr. Merrell's calls, he found an old cobbler's bench that had belonged to his grandfather. Later he asked her to send it to him. The check he mailed her was just the amount she always paid for their "sitting," so she sent it down to the church in Canton Center.

Allan H. Conklin — John Hart — John Braislin — William Wells — *Town of Canton* — Daniel Merrell — William Merrell, Sr.

### BREEZY HILL ROAD

The Beckwith place as it used to be called, now owned by John Braislin, was the home of Harvey Mills. Situated on the hills, it has a beautiful view of the ranges, including a glimpse of Nepaug reservoir. Until recent years it was run as a farm. Edward Beckwith carried on a milk route. It is now unoccupied.

*John Braislin — Spencer Goodwin — Zina Hotchkiss — Antonia Brighenti — John Ryan — Edward Beckwith — Austin Beckwith — (Harvey Mills).*

The John Simpson place used to be known as the Whiting place. It was first settled by William Paine in 1758. Elijah Whiting came from Simsbury in 1820, and soon after built the present house. The house has now the addition of a greenhouse, where Mrs. Simpson raises a great variety of potted plants.

John Simpson — Louis Battistoni — William Ryan — (Elijah Whiting) — William Paine.

The house now owned by William C. Riddle, Jr. was built by Dwight Humphrey in 1850. It was sold to James Donovan about 1866. Two other houses on this once called Mulcundry Road are listed on the 1855 map as belonging to Dwight Humphrey. He was well known for his skill in framing buildings, and was in great demand to superintend "raisings." He was much below average in height, but his answer to any who joked him about it was, "What I lack in stature, I make up in feelings." This place has had many owners, and in recent years has not been run as a farm. The house has had many improvements.

William C. Riddle, Jr. — Cecil Powell — . . . . Puro — Morris Goldfarb — . . . . Leucoski — Fritz Weingarth — Samuel A. Phelps — Amos Hosford — Orrin Hosford — James Donovan — Dwight Humphrey.

## EAST MOUNTAIN ROAD

Going east on this road past the Sturgeon house, we come to the home of Elmer Blackman. This was originally a blacksmith shop, and served as such for several generations of Pliny Cases, followed by Amos Hosford and George F. Pratt. Clarence Vining, a grandson of Ruggles Case and, who succeeded him in the North Canton shop, moved to Canton Center about 1900, building rooms over the shop for his home. Here he lived, working at his trade, until his death in 1940. Since then the building has been rented to the Blackmans as a home.

Elmer Blackman — *Grace Cole* — Clarence Vining.

Mrs. Lena Bidwell's house is not on the 1855 map. Until his recent death, it was the home for some years of Albert Bidwell.

Albert Bidwell — Webster Case — Wilson Case — George F. Pratt — Amos Hosford.

We have no date for Mrs. Charlotte Craig's house, though it appears on the 1855 map as the home of Widow P. Case and T. J. Allen. It is the story and a half type, and has had some changes from the original. A bay window has been added, a veranda built across the front, and the rooms changed inside. A stone fireplace has been built on the north end of the house. A blacksmith shop used to stand on the north west corner of the lot, on the main road. George Smith and Philip Perkins were both blacksmiths.

Mrs. Charlotte Craig—Willis Demars—Edward Hosford—Philip Perkins — Charles Smith — George Smith — (T. J. Allen, Wd. P. Case).

Mrs. Butler P. Crittenden lives in a house owned by Mrs. Grace Cole. It stands at the bend of the mountain road, and is marked E. Spring on the 1855 map. It may be well over the hundred year mark, and has not been changed very much in its outward appearance.

The following incident occurred when I was a girl. The hill up past this house was a favorite sliding place, and noons the school children took their "pig stickers" and one or two double rippers up as far as they dared, to enjoy the swift ride down the hill. If the hill was in good shape, the sleds would sometimes cross the main road and stop on the road going back of the store. Most of the children would not go up far beyond this house on the turn, where Mr. and Mrs. Dwight Case lived, but some more daring would go up to the "Big Bend," and took a chance on safely rounding the turn by the Case house. One day a loaded double ripper came rushing down, tipped over right in front of the house, one of the girls landing on a stone between the gateposts. Her head was cut

and bleeding. Mrs. Case came out and asked us to bring her in. She had the girl lie down on the couch, and then administered a remedy that I had supposed existed only in a nursery rhyme. It was a plaster of "vinegar and brown paper!"

Mrs. Butler P. Crittenden — Carl Fransson — Gordon Hunt — Mrs. Jessie James — Mrs. Rupert Edgett — Winthrop Dunbar — Harold Humphrey, Jr. — Russell Richardson — Arleigh Richardson — Shirley Allen — Harold Humphrey, Sr. — *Grace Cole* — Harvey Seger — Henry P. Lane — Dwight Case — (E. Spring).

## HUMPHREY ROAD

The home of Arthur W. Sweeton is on the 1869 map. It was probably built about 1860. It has a later style of architecture, perhaps Victorian, as it has dormer windows, a scalloped trim around the gables, and a bay window extending up two stories. There are no fireplaces, but a pipe hole in almost every room. The grounds were planted with many kinds of ornamental trees, some of which still remain. A row of mountain ash and a fence along the road are gone. It was called Rock Oaks. In the oak that stood on the corner near the pond there used to be a platform with seats that were directly over the road, a favorite spot for children. My grandmother often used to come to the foot of the steps into the tree with a tray of cookies and lemonade for us children.

A. W. Sweeton — Mrs. F. G. Humphrey — F. H. Tingley — Russell Richardson — Albert Bidwell — Herbert Sturgeon — Albert Seger — Homer de Lavanway — G. W. Lamphier, Sr. — Alfred F. Humphrey — Sherman Brown — Mrs. Selden White — Rev. Charles N. Lyman. (Rev. Lyman was pastor of the local church 1862-1868.)

The Henry Seger place was built by Orange Case about 1803. Orange Case was killed by a falling tree, the first tree cut for the church in Canton Center, built in 1814. His widow later married Ephraim Mills, Jr., who lived on Lewis Case's place.

Henry Seger — *Martin Seger* — Mrs. Jane Rood — F. G. Humphrey — Maria Strickland — Maria M. Case — (Orange Case).

Mrs. Roscoe Bristol's house was originally smaller, a story and a half. It was the home of Calvin Case, Jr., and was near the first grist-mill in West Simsbury. The house has had many changes, having been raised to two stories by Mr. Bristol, and it has now been arranged for two families, Mrs. Bristol occupying the rooms on the west. When Lewis Cowles bought the place, he built a carriage shop over the grist-mill, with a large ramp in front. Here he repaired, built, and painted wagons and carriages. Tires were reset in the blacksmith shop south of the mill. Mr. Cowles often presented Canton Center girls with a rolling pin and potato masher when they got married. After Mr. Humphrey bought the place, he tore down the mill building, and put in a

sawmill which he operated for several years. He also rebuilt the log dam, using reinforced concrete. (One end of this dam was washed away during the '55 flood)

Roscoe C. Bristol — Hayden Buttles — Lewis Case — *F. G. Humphrey* — Lewis Cowles — (Calvin Case, Jr.).

Lewis Case lives on the place originally settled by Capt. Zacheus Case, who built a house in 1747. It was painted red and was the salt box type. The second and present house was built by Frederick G. Humphrey in 1893. It is on the same site, but larger. Ephraim Mills, Jr. helped Abiel Brown in collecting facts for his "Genealogical Sketches of the Early Settlers of West Simsbury, now Canton, Conn." from which so many facts have been used in this book. His daughter, Caroline (Mrs. Rollin Humphrey) began her education by walking when four years old to the school then located on the hill opposite Mrs. Mollie Webster's. When she was a child, Sunday began at sundown Saturday night, and she could not begin to read a book on Sunday night until she could count ten stars. When Mr. Humphrey lived here he built two ice houses, and sold the ice in Collinsville. He did general farming, setting out large orchards on the hill to the west. He also raised tobacco, and hired a few men in the winter to sort crops for others. Logs were brought in to the mill during sledding and sawed into lumber in the spring. Peaches and apples were picked in the fall. Some of the apples were packed in barrels and shipped to England.

Lewis Case, Jr. — F. G. Humphrey — Wilbur White — Selden White — (Ephraim Mills, Jr.) — Jacob and Joseph Foote — Stephen Harris — Zacheus Case.

## PART III

### Old Houses — Collinsville

#### COLLINSVILLE

BY SARA LOUGEE LATIMER

Collinsville is the youngest of Canton's settlements, and until the building of the Collins Co. was known as South Canton, the name being changed to Collinsville, in honor of Mr. Samuel Collins. In 1866 it was made a separate village and its citizens ceased going to Canton Center to vote.

The first house was probably the log home of one John Woodford built about 1745. He later built the "Tim Case Tavern" and still later the Collinsville hotel, called the Ocean House. After the Valley House was built it was made into tenements and known as the Old Hotel, and owned by the Collins Co.

Capt. Frederick Humphrey built one of the earliest houses, 1789, later known as the Correl Humphrey House, passing into the Collins

Co. hands in 1867 and remodeled into two tenements. It was of a large colonial type of house of that period, with a secret stairway leading to the attic. Secret meetings of the Masons were supposed to have been held there in the days of Anti-Masonry. It stood just south of the Engine House, so called on Center Street, and was torn down in the early 1900's to make way for the two modern double tenement houses now standing there. Probably the oldest house now standing in the village proper is the home of Mr. Edwin Ripley, built in 1815 by his great great grandfather, Mr. Elias Woodford, whose wives, Zada and Fanny, were the daughters of Capt. Frederick Humphrey.

Other houses still remaining in the same direct line are the homes of A. O. Mills, David Brown, Burton and Lucelia Harrington (two houses) and Dorothea Crippen.

Collateral lines include, Guy Davis, Avis Nelson, Lulu Parish and John Owen.

It has not been possible to date exactly all the houses listed on the 1869 map but it is probable that many of them were built in the 1850's or early 60's on land purchased from the Collins Co. All Collins Co. deeds carried the clause that no intoxicating liquors could be sold on the property then or ever and the farm of Mr. A. O. Mills furnished much of the land for those farther to the north.

## THE GREEN

### Gordon Ventres House

This was the home of Mr. Charles H. Blair, Sr. an official of the Collins Co., built on land acquired from the Collins Co. 1846, afterwards occupied by his daughter, Mrs. Harriet Blair Flint. After her death, the heirs sold to Mr. Gordon Ventres.

Collins Company  
(John Meconkey)

This house was built in 1847 and was bought by the Collins Co. from heirs of Mr. S. V. Woodbridge, who built it, and has been occupied by a series of the Company's employees.

Mr. Woodbridge had a Livery Stable and was Deputy Sheriff.

### Dr. Ralph B. Cox House

This house was built in the 60's by Mr. J. B. Dewey, who kept a livery stable. At his widow's death it was bought by Dr. Cox, who still resides here.

Collins Company  
(Guy Whitney)

This house was acquired from the Collins Co. by Mr. Emerson Moody in 1839 who sold to Nathan Brainard, then to Seth P. Norton

and on to Mr. George Chapin, passing into the hands of Julius E. Goodman, who had a general dry goods and grocery business in the stores now occupied by Dr. Nathan and William Panke. After Mr. Goodman, Mr. J. D. Andrews bought it in 1880.

Mr. Andrews was at one time the Treasurer of the Collinsville Savings Society. At his widow's death the Collins Co. bought it, being occupied by their employees, at present being the home of Mr. Guy Whitney.

Collins Company  
(A. J. VanWiggeran)

This house was built by Mr. Frederic A. Barton in 1841 and eventually came into the ownership of Dr. R. H. Tiffany, and was known for many years as "the Tiffany House." The Collins Co. now own it and it is occupied by Mr. VanWiggeran.

## MAIN STREET

The west end of the north side of Main Street was wiped out by fire in 1887, consequently Main Street of our history begins at Market Street. The buildings on the south side are comparatively new too.

### Eaton Block

The Eaton Block on Main Street was built in 1867 by Mr. D. W. Bidwell, who had a hardware store, carrying cooking and parlor stoves. He sold to E. J. Smith, the Eaton Hardware buying from Mr. Smith's estate. In former years the 2nd floor contained a comfortable tenement and a dentist's office.

Mr. Eaton's business now uses the entire building.

Hough Block — so-called  
(Property of Stanley Mrozienski)

This block was built in 1867 by Mr. H. E. Harrington, brother-in-law of Mr. Emerson Hough, who later purchased it and had a drug store there for many years, his business being taken over by Mr. Joseph McNamara. It also contains the owner's store.

In days gone by there were tenements on the second floor followed by offices and Miss Lucy Carr's Millinery Shop. The 3rd floor was the Masonic Hall for many years and later occupied by the Odd Fellows and many other fraternal organizations.

Collins Company  
(Valley House)

The Valley House was built by the Collins Co. in 1868, the opening taking place May 7, 1868 in the evening with Mr. Nelson Brainard, the first proprietor. The two Collins Co. tenements, standing north of the Town Hall were moved there to make way for the new hostelry. Mr.

O. H. Miner, Mr. H. T. Wheeler, Mr. Arthur Shuffle, Mr. Robert Hiner, Mrs. Bess Randall are some of the genial hosts during the years. Mr. Louis Pane is the present Proprietor.

### The Dr. Eddy House

This house directly opposite Dr. Eddy's home was built before 1869 by Mr. James Spencer. Mr. Spencer was blind and for many years played the organ at the Congregational Church. From Mr. Spencer, it passed into the hands of Mr. Luke Chapman. After his widow's death, Mrs. Jennie Case Wilcox bought the place selling it to Dr. George W. Eddy.

Collins Company  
(Percy Waddy)

This was one of the two schools built in the early 1830's. It stood near the dam until about 1855, when it was moved to its present location, to make way for the new Railroad to Pine Meadow, the survey showing it pass thru the school. It has housed many Collins Co. employees, now being the home of Mr. Percy Waddy and his sister.

### FRONT STREET

#### Collins Company Office Building

In 1830, Collins and Co. built the first office building on the site of the present. The first floor was the office, the basement was used as a school and the hall on the 2nd floor was used for Religious Services until the Church was built in 1836.

The present office building was built in 1868. For many years the basement housed the Post Office and a library of a sort. The 3rd floor had a spacious well equipped Hall with stage which was always available to the town's people for use at only the cost of the janitor. As business increased, it had to be done away with and some of the offices were moved to the 3rd floor.

For many years the Company graciously allowed Phoebe Humphrey Chapter to use one of the rooms as their home, again only asking for janitor's fees. Within the past few years their business required the room and the D.A.R. had to take leave of their comfortable quarters.

At this time they would like to pay special tribute to the Collins Co. for their many courtesies.

Collins Company  
(So-called Barbour House)  
(Downey Family)

This house was one of three that the Collins Co. built at the time they started their axe works and was bought by Mr. Samuel Barbour as a family homestead, 1827.

Mr. Barbour ran a general store. The property passed on to his son, Mr. A. H. Barbour, and then to Miss Josephine Barbour, daughter of Mr. A. H. Barbour.

Upon Miss Barbour's death in 1938, the Collins Co. bought it back and it is now occupied by the Downey Family.

Collins Company  
(Helen Alderman)

The house just south of the Barbour house was built at the same time, 1827, this house was and has always been used as a tenement and is now occupied by the Alderman's.

### Collins Company Tenements

No list of houses of Collinsville would be complete without the history of the 45 double houses which the Company built. In 1831, 21 houses on the east side of the river and in 1832, 24 on the west side, up and down the hills.

Their history is most unique. They still stand, only one ever being consumed by fire as far as can be learned, one was torn down and two were moved to new locations.

The low rambling and to the stranger unattractive houses originally consisted of just the main part, with living room, pantry and bedroom on the first floor with two sleeping rooms and a small hall above. They were built at a cost of \$500.00 each and each tenant was required to take a boarder or two.

Inside, nowadays one would be amazed at the comfort and quality of these homes. Such instances of small investments growing to such proportions are staggering, one doubts if he travelled the country over he would find just this type of dwelling, built and maintained as early as these and still in such excellent condition. They rented at first for \$25.00 per year.

### CENTER STREET

#### Dr. Kilburn House

This house was built by the Collins Co. in 1832. At one time Mr. David W. Catlin resided there (1854). Mr. Milo Chidsey eventually acquired it, his heirs selling to Dr. W. H. Crowley, next came Dr. Campbell, who sold to Dr. Kilburn, its present occupant.

#### Edwin F. Ripley House

This is probably the oldest house standing in the village proper of Collinsville, having been built in 1815 by Mr. Elias Woodford, Mr. Ripley's great great grandfather. It is situated at the end of Center Street at the junction of Huckleberry (formerly Whortleberry) Hill Road and has always remained in the family.

### Harry Myers House

This house was the property of a Mr. Elam Converse, having been built previous to 1869. Dr. Barnes, The Emhoff Family, Andersons and now Mr. Harry Myers, State Policeman have been its occupants.

### John Selden House

The 1869 map shows this as the home of Mr. T. C. Wilbur. Later it became the home of a Mr. Wilmot, whose daughters, Mrs. Warren Noble and Mrs. Julia Harvey occupied it for many years, they leaving it to the Latimer Sisters. Their heirs selling to Mr. John Selden.

### David H. Brown House

This house is situated on Center Street and was built by Theophilus Humphrey, the great grandfather of Mr. Brown, 1847.

It fronted on Church Street Hill, and you will notice the front entrance is on the side of the house. It has remained in the family having been occupied successively by Mr. David Holbrook, son-in-law, Mr. Lee Kelly and Mr. Samuel Brown, grand sons-in-laws and now by Mr. David Brown, son of Mr. Samuel Brown. Mr. Holbrook was Foreman of the Plow Shop.

### Rafferty House

This house on the corner of Main Street and Center Street was built about 1847, probably by Edwin Bidwell, father of Mr. Daniel and Jasper Bidwell, whose widow married a Mr. Garrett. Various families have lived there. Dr. Eddy buying the place some years ago and sold in 1955 to Mr. Edward J. Rafferty, whose home was washed away by the August Flood of 1955.

### Collins Company (Engine House)

The old engine house, so-called on the south east corner of Main and Center Streets was built previous to 1869. Downstairs housed the old hand fire pump, now in the Museum. Upstairs has served many purposes, among them, private schools, band rehearsals and scout meetings. Downstairs has been converted into a garage.

### Leo A. Daniels House

This was commonly referred to as the "Brick House" and was the property of Mr. Elam Converse before 1869. Mr. Converse acquired the land from Mr. Elias Woodford. Mr. Converse sold to Mr. W. H. Hawley, whose son, Mr. Fred Hawley sold to Mrs. Lydia Arnold. Mrs. Arnold sold to Dr. J. B. Flint his wife's heirs sold to Mr. and Mrs. Alexander Shaw. Mr. Daniels bought it a few years ago from the Shaws.

### Congregational Church Parsonage

This house next south of Dr. Kilburn's was built by the Collins Co. at the same time, 1832, as Dr. Kilburn's home, and has always been used as a parsonage.

### Lester Olson House

This house was built in 1854 by Deacon Horatio Goodwin, a harness maker in the village for many years. Mr. Goodwin was the great grandfather of Mr. Clair Elston, Vice President of the Collins Co. It has passed thru the several generations and has remained in the family until its recent sale to Mr. Lester Olson, our Postmaster.

### John Owen House

This house was built about the same time as the Goodwin and was owned by a Mrs. Brandriff, who was the sister of Miss Hattie Crane. Miss Crane resided there for many years and at her death it passed on to her nephew Mr. John Owen, and then to his widow. It has been remodeled into a three tenement house.

### Leonard Rogers House

This house was built in 1854 by Orrin Case. Mr. E. Frank Bidwell bought it in 1857, his widow and heirs resided there after his death, finally becoming the property of Mr. Frank Bidwell and Mrs. Ella Hatch. It is now the property of Josephine Bidwell Rogers' (Mr. Bidwell's daughter) daughters and has been in the family since 1857.

### Quintal House

This was the home of Mr. N. L. Polk, in 1869, a druggist. Mr. Ulrich Haury bought of Mr. Polk, his estate selling to Mr. Herbert Smith, it then passed on to Mr. P. Donovan, then Mr. Carl Lane and is now the property of Mrs. Isabel Quintal and is used as a tenement house for two families.

### Trinity Church Parish House

This house was built about 1853 by Absalom Williams. It was sold after his death to the parents of Mr. W. H. Robinson, who left same to Trinity Church Parish. Mr. Williams was the grandfather of Mrs. Myron Butler, whose mother married Mr. A. W. Bristol, Sr.

### William E. Woods House

This house stands immediately back of the John Owen house on the road that leads to Johnson Place. It was built in 1854 by Mr. Henry A. Spring. Sold to Mr. L. P. Martin and then to the Browns of West Simsbury, their heirs selling to Mr. Woods.

### The Tolides House

This house stands on what is known as Johnson Place, originally called "Henryville." It was built by Orrin Case, in 1854, who resided here for a while then selling to Mr. George Henry, grandfather of Mrs. Carl Svenson.

The Henry heirs sold to Mr. Arthur Johnson, then Mr. Christie Tolides bought it.

Collins Company  
(Emerson Hough House)

This house just opposite Johnson Place was built in 1854 by Mr. Henry A. Spring, then passing into Mr. Emerson Hough's hands, who resided there with his family for many years. After his death, his heirs sold to the Collins Co. Mr. Arthur Curry now lives here.

Harold Butler House

This house on North Street just off River Street, was the property of the J. B. Dewey Estate, housing a livery business. From Mr. Dewey it passed into the hands of a Mr. Hiram Chandler, then to Mr. Wm. Henry, Jr. and on to his son, Mr. Whitfield Henry, and is now owned and occupied by the Harold Butler family.

EAST STREET

Quintal House

This house was built before 1869 by Mr. S. M. Tatro on land acquired from Mr. Seth P. Norton. Mr. Tatro was head of the Grinding Dept. of the Collins Co. It is now the property of Mrs. Isabel Quintal and her son Richardson. They bought from Mrs. Sarah Phillips. Some time during the years it was made into a two family house, and Mr. Richardson Quintal occupies one part of the house.

Edward Berg House

This house was known for years as the "Correl Hitchkiss House" and the home of a dear teacher of long ago, Miss Louise Hotchkiss. Miss Hotchkiss was also a charter member of Phoebe Humphrey Chapter, D.A.R. and Mr. Hotchkiss' daughter. It was built in 1854 by Mr. German German, who sold to Mr. Hotchkiss. Owners thru the years have been Mr. Martin Bader, Mr. Charles Fox and the present occupant, Mr. Edward Berg.

Guy Davis House

This house was built in 1854 by Mr. Orrin Case and hold to Mr. Sabra Weeks, father of Mrs. Almado Davis, who left it to her husband's nephew, Mr. Guy Davis, who now resides here, so it has virtually remained in the same family.

Amos W. Driggs House

This house, for many years the home of Mr. Bleeker Forbes, Foreman of the Box Shop and the grandson of Phoebe Humphrey, was built in 1863 by a Mr. Dewey, whose widow married Mr. Forbes. After Mr. Forbes death it was purchased by Mr. Adam Brucker, who sold to Mr. Walter Reed. Its present owner and occupant it Mr. Reed's daughter, Mrs. Amos Driggs.

## Elizabeth Terry Folley House

This house was built in 1858 by Mr. John Baker, and the map of 1869 shows it as the home of Mr. William Perkins. The family of Mr. Harry Terry lived here for many years, his daughter, Mrs. Folley, now being the owner.

Mrs. Terry inherited it from the Helen M. Wright Estate.

## CEMETERY ROAD

### Florence Buttles Katzung House

The 1869 map shows place as the property of Mr. T. M. Curtiss, who at one time owned the Hugins' place burned some years ago. Later the Quinn family lived there. Mrs. Katzung acquired it from the Cemetery Association.

## HIGH STREET

### Fernan Vaillancourt House

This house on High Street was built in 1858 by Harvey Barbour, being acquired by Mr. Rollin D. Lane as the 1869 map shows. Mr. Lane was a machinist at the Collins Co.

### Collins Company (French Blocks, so-called)

These blocks of six tenements each were built in 1863 and 1864, at the top of Main Street Hill. One of them, the south one burned in 1944.

### W. F. Provost House

This house on East High Street was built prior to 1869 by A. W. Bentley, Supt. Canal R. R. (Collinsville Branch), later it became the home of Mr. Richard Wagner, Sr. and was sold by the heirs to Mr. W. F. Provost, whose widow now resides here.

I believe at one time it was used as a parsonage by the short-lived Methodist Society.

### Dale McDonald House

This house on High Street was built by Mr. Bleeker Forbes before 1869, and occupied by various tenants, the last one, Mr. Hiram Jones finally purchasing it.

Mr. McDonald bought it from the heirs of Mr. Jones' daughter.

### Louis H. Ehrhardt House

This house is located on High Street and was the home of Mr. J. Gerber, in 1869, who had a barber shop and Bathing Rooms.

It later became the property of Mrs. Alice Marcy Williams. Mr. J. Richard Wivagg next bought it and sold to its present owner, Mr. Louis H. Ehrhardt.

### Uno Johnson House

This house standing on High Street was built by Martin Pease before 1869, or was occupied by him at that time and sold to the Hugins Estate.

It is now the property of Mr. Uno Johnson, who resides here.

### Louis Tuomala

This house built before 1869 and was occupied by Mr. Rodney Carr.

Mr. Carr was a wagon maker and had his shop on the site of Mr. James Grant's Garage, recently washed away by the great flood of August 19, 1955.

Mr. Carr's heirs sold to Mr. George Downey, then Mr. Maurice Clark acquired it, selling to Mr. Tuomala, its present occupant.

### Charles Roncaioli House

This was the property of Mr. John E. Wheelock, who doubtless built it as he was a builder, before 1869. Mr. Wheelock sold to Mr. Aaron Smith who lived there for many years, his heirs selling to Mr. Roncaioli, now living here.

The house immediately in back of Mr. Roncaioli and his property, has always been part of the property and has had many tenants.

### E. H. Crippen House

Mr. W. W. Bidwell, a lawyer, built this house and resided here in 1869. After that it became the property of his daughter, Jessie, Mrs. E. H. Crippen, whose daughter now resides here.

Mr. Bidwell was commonly called "Lawyer Bidwell," he served long and faithfully on the "School Board," was active in all civic affairs and "dispersed law" between times.

## SOUTH STREET

### Dewey Rote House

The land this house stands on was purchased by Elizabeth Rust from the Collins Co. in 1848. In 1860 a Mr. F. F. Smith came into the employ of the Collins Co. and produced the beautifully curved plowshare of today (From History of Collins Co. 1926). He was known as "Plow Smith." He resided here. Mr. A. S. Brainard eventually bought the place and resided here until his death. He was followed by Dower, Driggs and Mr. Dewey Rote who now resides here with his family.

I believe at one time it was used as a boarding house.

### Nixon House

This house is listed on the 1869 map as the home of a Mr. F. H. Sears, possibly a brother of the late Mr. E. H. Sears, President of the Collins Co.

Next a Mr. Scott occupied it, then Mr. Murray Buttles, then Mr. Edward Belden, and it is now the property of the Nixon's, who reside here.

#### Theodore Demski House

This house was the home of Mr. F. Bradley, having been built before 1869.

For many years it was owned and occupied by the William Phillips family, recently having been bought by Mr. Theodore Demski, who resides here.

#### Olga Krutsky House

This house was built by Mr. Lucius Converse in 1854, next Mr. Stephen Mallory took possession, a relative, possibly Mrs. Mallory was his daughter, it passed on to their daughter Mrs. Frank Mills. Mr. Dexter Parish, a Shaw family, then Mrs. Olga Krutsky acquired it and resides here now.

#### F. W. Konold House

This house was built by Mr. D. B. Hale, U. S. Inspector and Town Registerer, on land bought of Collins Co. 1838. His heirs sold to Mr. F. W. Konold and his widow now occupies it.

#### F. W. Konold House

This house directly east of the other F. W. Konold house, was originally the home of Mr. J. Grow, who sold to Mr. James Smith. After Mrs. Smith's death it was sold to a Mrs. Ericson, who sold to Mr. Konold, who remodeled it into two tenements. Its present occupants are Mr. Edwin W. Snow and Mr. John L. Thivierge.

#### Brown House, South Street

This house was the property of Mr. Charles H. Blair, and used as a cottage home for tenants for many years. Afterwards Mr. Blair's heirs sold to Mr. Samuel Brown, whose son now owns it. Mr. David Repp now occupies it.

#### Collins Company, South Street (Home of the late Frank Wilder)

This house, occupied by Mr. Charles H. Blair, Jr., undoubtedly stood on the corner of the Green, the house where Mr. Leonard Hough now lives, and was probably moved to its present location to make room for the corner house.

This house was built for Mr. Sears, about 1880.

#### RIVER STREET

#### Collins Company (Albert Hudon and Fred Sharp)

This house on the corner of River and North Streets was originally the Collins Co. Office, being moved to its present location, when the

Company built its new office in 1868. After its removal to its present location it was made into tenements and has always been occupied by Collins Co. employees, now being the home of Mr. Albert Hudon and Mr. Fred Sharp.

#### Mary P. Lewis House

This house was built in 1846 by Mr. Henry A. Shepard, sold to Mr. Benjamin Wingate, whose widow married Mr. F. J. Smith. It was later purchased by Dr. George F. Lewis, well known physician, father of the present owner.

#### Richard Wagner

This house really facing River Street but having an entrance on Center Street was built by Mr. William D. West, a blacksmith and carriage maker in town for many years, leaving Collinsville in 1867. Mr. O. A. Beckwith bought the place. Mr. Beckwith ran a dry goods and grocery business. Mr. Beckwith's son-in-law and daughter acquired the place after Mr. Beckwith's death, Mr. and Mrs. J. H. Bidwell, Mr. Bidwell being a well known banker. Mr. Bidwell sold to Mr. W. R. Wagner, father of the present owner and occupant, Mr. Richard Wagner.

#### Everett Eaton House

This house has an entrance on Center Street and was the property of Mr. A. T. Farwell in 1869. Mr. Amos Hart, great grandfather of Mr. Everett Eaton, acquired it in 1872. It has been remodeled and sold and resold but finally came back into the family now being the home of Mr. Eaton.

#### Geraldine Grant House

This house was built on land sold to Mr. Levi Hough by Nodiah Case January 14, 1848. Mr. Howell C. Hough, son of Mr. Levi Hough, came into possession of it at his father's death. Mrs. Dexter Parish, daughter of Mr. H. C. Hough sold it and eventually Mrs. Geraldine Grant bought it and resides here.

### SPRING STREET

#### Collins Company (Mr. G. W. Graham)

This house was built by Mr. G. H. Nearing in 1856; who was in the knife handling department of the Collins Co. The Collins Co. now owns it, after being the property of several others and is now the home of Mr. G. W. Graham.

#### John Blanchard House

This house on Spring Street, was built by Mr. S. N. Coddington before 1869 sold to Mr. A. F. Alderman, then occupied by his son, Mr. Theron Alderman, whose heirs sold to Mr. John Blanchard, now residing here.

Collins Company  
(John Fletcher and P. Hopkins)

This cement house on Spring was built by the Collins Co. in 1864 for its employees. Mr. John Fletcher and Mr. P. Hopkins now reside here.

Collins Company  
(Edward Reuber and Theodore Zommer)

This house was built in 1858 by Mr. Lawrence Colton on the west side of Spring Street, whose heirs sold to The Collins Co. The Reubers and Zommers now make their home here.

MAPLE AVENUE

Ward Potts House

This house was built in 1867 by Mr. Albert Williams, dealer in flour, grain, feed and coal. It passed thru several hands, finally being bought by Mr. Ward Potts. Both Mr. and Mrs. Potts have died and it is now for sale again.

Frank Cox House

This house was moved from the junction of Maple Avenue and River Road about 1867, being first used as a store. It was remodeled into a dwelling house after a succession of owners, Mr. Charles A. Farnham bought it and his daughter and her husband, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Cox now own and live here.

The Harrington House

This was originally the Harrington Homestead, having been built on the River Road, being moved by the Collins Co. to Maple Avenue about 1868 after the Company built their dam and there was trouble with high water. It has always remained in the family, and is now the property of the great grand children, Lucelia and Burton Harrington and has been made into a number of tenements.

Herman Case House

This house built before 1869 on Maple Avenue was known as the Creighton Place and was sold to Mrs. Marshall Case, leaving same to her daughter, Mrs. Inez Case Gwynne, who sold to Mr. Porter Case. Since Mr. Case's death, his son Herman has resided there. It is a two family house with Mr. Robert Gehring occupying the other part.

Burton Harrington House

This house was built by Mr. James Clark, probably about 1860 the great grandfather of the present owners and occupants, Burton and Lucelia Harrington. It is a two family and Mr. Norman Lambert lives in one of the apartments. It has always been in the family.

### William C. Haury House

This place was built by Mr. Cyrus Harvey in 1868, and bought by Mr. W. C. Haury in 1892. Mrs. Haurey still living here.

### E. J. Parmelee House

This house was owned in 1869 by E. C. Pettibone and was known for years as the Pettibone place. Mr. Pettibone sold to Mr. Cyrus Harvey, and at his widow's death it was inherited by her nephew, Mr. William Barber, who sold to Mr. E. J. Parmelee. Mr. Parmelee's widow now resides here.

### Frank and Avis Nelson House

This house was built by Mr. Jarvis Harrington, before 1869, his widow leaving it to her niece Mrs. Nelson. Mr. Harrington had a general country store, dry goods, groceries and miscellaneous items.

### James Barraclough House

This house was built about 1853 for Mr. Rollin O. Humphrey, whose wife was the daughter of Mr. Ephraim Mills. Mr. James Carr resided here for a while finally was bought by Mr. S. E. Brown, a feed and coal dealer here for many years. Some years after his death his daughter Mrs. Frank Case made it her home, but sold a few years ago to Mr. James Barraclough now occupying it.

### Dexter and Lulu Parish House

This house was built by Mr. J. L. Sanborn, probably about 1860. It passed on to his son, Mr. Howard L. Sanborn, his widow leaving it to her niece, Mrs. Parish.

### The Specia House

This house at the junction of Maple and Dyer Avenues was built by Mr. Jasper E. Barber who resided there for many years. It was originally the average type of house of those days, a two story main part with an ell.

After Mr. Specia bought the place, it was enlarged and modernized with several tenements and is owned by his heirs. Mr. Specia acquired the place from Anna Gibbs estate in 1898.

### Gay Conlin House

This house on Maple Avenue was built before 1869 by Mr. James R. Andrus, an inspector in the Collins Co. Tempering Shop.

He sold to Mr. Marshall T. Burgess, who in turn sold to Mr. H. D. Lavanway. Miss Marie Rollins was the next owner. Miss Rollins selling to Mr. Conlin, present owner and occupant.

### Ljongquist House

This house was the property of Mr. James Atwater, the original farm house being some rods east of the present Donald Viering house

and long since burned. Mr. Atwater was a farmer, his son Clayton, having a nursery on the farm for many years, finally removing it to Agawam, Mass. It was owned by the late Mr. Arthur Johnson, whose heirs sold to the Ljongquist Family, who reside here.

#### John Tabel House

This was the "Old Dan Frisbie" place and stood where the Potts place now stands. It was bought by Mr. E. C. Pettibone and moved a quarter of a mile up the road to his Tool Works on Ned's Brook. For many years a blacksmith shop was part of the property. It has had various owners, the present owner being The Town of Canton. Miss Mabel Bossardt has continued to live here since the death of her brother, John Tabel.

#### ALLEN PLACE

##### Kellerman House

This house on Allen Place was built in 1868 by Mr. Alfred Allen and remained in the family for many years. In 1912 Mr. George F. Pratt purchased the property but died before occupying it. The Kellerman Family then acquired it and still reside here.

##### Leroy Miner House

This house was built in 1865 by Mr. William Shook, a Contractor in the Plow Shop. The land was a part of the Orange Mills Farm, and when built was in the open lot with no road near, being reached from the Canton Road across the lots. The Shook Family resided here for many years and in due time a road was constructed to it from the Canton Road. It passes thru a succession of owners and tenants finally becoming the property of Mr. Miner, who now resides here.

##### Elmer Anderson House

Mr. Warren Case built this house in the late sixties and resided there until he sold to Mr. Marcus Upson about 1900. Upon Mrs. Upson's death in 1933 Mr. Anderson purchased the place and now lives here.

##### Charles Allen House

This house was built in the late sixties by a Mr. Goddard. Owners have been Mr. Michael Ronan, Mr. Sherman Bidwell, then the present owner. The place was bought by Mr. Allen in 1893. Mr. Allen's widow still lives here.

##### Harold Allyn House

This house was built by a Mr. Goddard during the construction of the Connecticut Western R. R. The basement being intended to be used as a saloon.

This venture was shortlived.

The place has been bought and sold many times, many of the owners being transients. Mr. James Reidy and his family owned and resided

here for many years, it coming to Mrs. Reidy from her mother, a Mrs. Lynch.

Its present owner and occupant, Mr. Allyn bought it in 1943.

## GILDERSLEEVE AVENUE

### Joseph Durkin House

This place on Gildersleeve Avenue was built before 1869 by Mr. Fay Brown who sold to Mr. William H. Dale, foreman of the foundry at the Collins Co. It remained in the Dale family for many years, passing thru several hands to Mr. Andrew Nissen, whose daughter, Mrs. Durkin and husband now own and occupy it.

### Herman Bristol House

A Mr. Gildersleeve for whom this street was named built this house prior to 1869. Mr. Gildersleeve had a small shop on Swett Brook (Ned's Brook, and remarked Rattlesnake Brook by the State) for fulling and dyeing homespun woolens. His daughter, Sarah married Mr. E. Brockway and resided there for many years. After her death it changed hands a number of times and is now owned and occupied by Mr. Herman Bristol.

## SIMONDS AVENUE

### Addison O. Mills House

This house was built by Mr. Benjamin Dyer for his son Thomas in 1756.

Mr. W. E. Simonds in an article in the Connecticut Quarterly of 1895 writes: "It has descended from the original builder thru an unbroken line of the ladies of the family to its present owner, who is of the same gentle persuasion," meaning Mrs. Simonds. Mrs. Simonds was the daughter of Orange Mills, so-called, but really Addison Orange Mills. He also writes: "Its beams, as hard as iron, its floors put down with oaken pins, its latch bolts wrought by a skillful blacksmith and adorned with little brass knobs of the shape and size of a pigeon's egg, all attest its antiquity." At her death it passed on to her nephew, Mr. A. O. Mills, the present occupant.

Mr. Mills is the grandson of Mr. Addison Orange Mills.

### Paul Olson House

This house is on the corner of River Road and Simonds Avenue and was built in the late 1700's probably 1784 by Rufus Garrett, finally coming into the possession of Mr. Theodore Pettibone. When Mr. Samuel Collins first came here before he built he boarded with Mr. Pettibone. The 1869 map lists the place as the property of Mr. O. Brown, who probably sold to the Sage Family, who occupied it for several generations. It has had several owners, Mr. Thomas Hewes

selling to Mr. Paul Olson, who now lives here. It is of the old colonial type and has been restored.

## RIVER ROAD

### George H. Redford House

In 1839, Mr. Nodiah Case sold about 2½ acres of land to Mr. Athuel Gridley, his estate sold to George Merrill who sold to A. O. Mills. Mr. Mills sold to Mr. Nathaniel Wright in 1853. Mr. Edward Ackart bought of Mr. Wright in 1863, whose widow left it to Mr. H. W. Humphrey. Mr. Humphrey sold to Jessie Mason Janes, then Mr. John J. McKim bought it and sold to Mr. Redford. At present it is the home of Mr. George H. Redford, just being done over after the ravages of the August (1955) flood. For many years it was used as sort of inn and a place for Stage Drivers to change horses. In 1868 Oliver Couch started a stage coach from Hartford, thru Farmington and Collinsville to Winsted, every other day.

### Thomas Small House

This house was probably built by Jesse Case who settled in West Simsbury about 1763. His son Augustus then lived there followed by his son Harlow, then on down to Harlow's son another Augustus. His heirs sold to Mr. Joseph Johnson, bought later by Dr. J. B. Flint, who sold to the Collins Co. Mr. Small bought from them. The present owner restored it about 15 years ago. It has the original windows, 6 x 8 panes, some original latches and hinges, etc. Two large fireplaces with brick oven, original stair case, some panelling, well on back porch, bayonet fire place crane, hand made nails. Vine outside stone foundation, called matrimony vine grows between partition of house and reappears in attic window.

### E. Raymond Bristol House

This place was built about 1750 by Capt. Daniel Wilcox who resided there until the 1801 flood, which swept away the forge in the bend of the river, he losing the property by being bound by the owners of the forge.

Mr. Luke Case then became owner, same being passed on to his son, Mr. Julius Case. Upon the death of Mr. and Mrs. Case the Parson's inherited it.

The Parsons sold to Mr. Roscoe Bristol, who in turn sold to Mr. E. Raymond Bristol, now residing here.

### Delos Hart House

This house in 1869 was the home of Mr. Orville Case, whose wife was the daughter of Rufus Tuller, whose family lived on the A. W. Bristol, Jr. place. It passed into the hands of Mr. G. A. Codaire, whose heirs sold to Mr. Harold Edgerton, who in turn sold to Mr. Delos Hart. Mr. Orville Case was a dealer in tobacco and cigars.

## ALBANY AVENUE

### Sterling Bristol House

Philip Harris was the first owner of this place, followed by Asher Hinman who married his daughter, Mr. Hinman being born in 1741. From them it passed into the hands of Thomas Bidwell, 3rd, who came here as early as 1787.

This place was known for more than forty years as Bidwell's Tavern. After Thomas' death in 1848, his son Lucien occupied the place, passing on to his son Oliver, in 1861. Mr. Anson W. Bristol, Sr. bought from Mr. Bidwell and Mr. Bristol's Son Sterling now owns and occupies the place. I rather doubt if the present house is the original house, partly due to the style and from rumors (unconfirmed) that Mr. Oliver Bidwell built "This splendid place."

### W. Bradley Thompson House

On the Albany Turnpike, a short distance north of the Sterling Bristol place, on the west side of the road the Old Bidwell Homestead stands. The Bidwells settled here in 1740. The original settler being Mr. Thomas Bidwell. The present house was built in 1815 by Col. Jasper Bidwell, grandson of Thomas the first. Col. Jasper Bidwell left it to his grandson, Sherman W. who sold to Mr. Michael Ronan. Mr. Ronan sold to Mr. Thompson, the present owner and occupant.

### John Marfyak House

This house belonged to the property of Oliver Bidwell. Mr. John North lived here, Mr. Charles Wilson also occupied it for a while. When the State Highway Department straightened Route 44, it was moved back to its present location. Mr. John Marfyak now owns and occupies it.

### Joseph Gerath House

This house was probably a part of the Merrill farm and eventually was bought by Mr. John Ronan. Eventually Mr. Gerath bought and occupies it.

### The Berton Bidwell House

This property was originally owned by the Merrill family and for many years an old red house stood here and was used as a tavern. It is the last house in the Town of Canton on Albany Turnpike, before the town line of New Hartford. The Present house was built about 1855 by Mr. Bidwell's great grandmother, Mrs. Olive Pike. Mr. Bidwell's son Thomas now resides here.

## POWDER MILL ROAD

This road runs parallel to Albany Avenue on the opposite side of the river. Its name comes from the fact that at one time there were powder mills at the mouth of the Nepash. At one time it was quite a

thriving little community, but the powder mills moved away with the coming of the railroad due to the danger from sparks from the passing engines, one by one the houses burned or fell into disuse so at present only two houses or rather what is left of them after the August 1955 flood remain. But as they are old land marks, they seem worthy of mention.

#### Dr. George Baker House

This is undoubtedly one of the oldest houses in town but just what year it was built, it has been impossible to ascertain. Probably a Wilcox was its first owner and builder. Mr. Asher Hinman moved here in 1786, it remained in the family thru several generations finally being bought by Mr. B. Saunders, who sold to Mr. Edward Mahl, later Dr. and Mrs. George Baker (Mrs. Baker being Mr. Mahl's daughter) took the place, using it as a summer home.

It was of the old style architecture, salt box type, still in its original form, but sad to say it suffered greatly from the 1955 flood, and its future hangs in the balance.

#### Joseph P. Wilusz House

Mr. Julius Hinman, grandson of Mr. Asher Hinman built and occupied this house for many years, then owned and occupied by his son, Mr. Zerah Hinman. It was originally the property of the Wilcoxes, the old house being moved back to make room for the present house. It has had a number of owners since the Hinman's and is now owned by Mr. Wilusz, but like the Baker House was all but washed away by the 1955 flood. Its future too is uncertain.

### WEST SIDE OF THE RIVER

#### Lina Hall House

This house was the farmhouse belonging to Mr. Samuel Collins' estate and Miss Hall's father ran Mr. Collins farm. It is probably the former home of Joseph Seger, Jr. who had a grist mill near the site of the Miner Lumber Co., crossing the river each day in a boat to tend the mill. In winter time he crossed on the ice. He resided here previous to 1795.

Abiel Brown relates a little incident in connection with Mr. Seger's mill. A Mr. Gleason a trader in the east village then called Suffrage brought in some sulphur (it was used sometimes at that time in families) to be pulverized. It was put into the corn mill and in the process it soon took fire, flamed up and made quite a scare. Mr. Gleason's broad-cloth coat was ruined, the mill became thoroughly scented with the "itch antidote" and was well noised about. A neighboring family brought in a small grist of Indian corn soon afterward and in trying to bake some johnny cakes before the fire their cakes ignited and blazed up. A man named Bethuel Parker, an apt poetical genius, wrote a poem entitled: "Hell on Earth or Brimstone in the Grist Mill." He compared

the episode to Mt. Etna in a blaze and closed with these lines:—

“Then Seger cries out in bitterness of soul  
Have mercy, Lord, though I did take large toll.”

#### Mubarek House

This house at the foot of Main Street on the west side of the river was built on land sold to the Grady Family by Bradford Marcy in 1852.

From the Grady family it became the property of Mrs. Mary Giersch. Later Mr. Philip Reichert bought same and occupied it with his sisters for many years. Some years ago, his sister Miss Anne Reichert sold to Edward Mubarek.

#### Frank Pierce House

This house was built by the Collins Co. around the late sixties and sold to Dr. George F. Lewis. Dr. Lewis sold to Mr. Cheney Doane, Sr. and it is now the property and home of his grandson Mr. Frank Pierce.

#### Alton Fish House

This house was built by Mr. Peter Myers on land bought from the Collins Co. in 1848. Mr. Thomas F. Myers his son resided here for many years, his heirs selling to Mr. Fish in 1949, who now lives here.

#### George Soucy House

This house situated well up on Torrington Avenue is listed on the 1869 map as the home of one J. Chandler. His children resided there for many years finally selling to a Mr. Abramson, he in turn selling to his son-in-law Mr. Fritz Anderson. Mr. Anderson sold to Mr. Zerah Hinman, after changing hand several times, Mr. Soucy bought and lives here.

#### Harold Erickson House

This house stands just north of the Soucy place and was listed on the 1869 map as the home of a Mr. Napy, a small farm. Mr. Erickson bought it from the Napy estate and it is now the property of Mr. Erickson's son, Harold, who lives here.

#### Martin Rioux House

This house stands at the junction of Torrington Avenue and Collins Road. It was formerly the property of Mr. Howard S. Collins, and was probably built about 1850 and known as the “Gate House,” a gate closing Collins Road, then a private drive to the Samuel Collins estate. Mr. Collins built this home in 1850, overlooking the beautiful Farmington River.

After the Collins family removed to Hartford, it changed hands several times, at one time being a Sanatorium, finally burning during the ownership of Mr. Arthur Johnson. The “Gate House” is now owned by Mr. Martin Rioux of Bristol, and occupied by Mr. Joseph Dubay and Mr. Adolph Bierut.

For many years the Gauthier family owned and lived here, also the William Zietlers and Fred Schmitts.



## PART IV

### EARLY SCHOOLHOUSES IN CANTON

BY ROSELINE C. ADAMS

In 1750, the year West Simsbury (now Canton) was incorporated as a parish, money was appropriated for schools. The first record is the appointment of Ezekiel Humphrey and David Adams to lay out money for "Woman Scholes for the instruction of children." Teaching had been done in the homes at first. East Hill records a log schoolhouse built in 1745 on land now belonging to John Cables.

When the School Society of West Simsbury was formed in 1759, three schools were built in different sections of the parish; North Canton, Canton Center and Canton Village.

The first schoolhouse in Canton Village, built in 1759, was on the Albany Turnpike near a big rock in front of R. G. Bradley's. This was torn down and a second one replaced it in 1775. This was moved in 1807 and became the upper part of John Butler's house. The third school, a two-story building, was built in 1808 on Canton Green, facing the present building. This was later moved over next to the cemetery and is now occupied by two families — Clyde Stickles and Harold Colton. The fourth schoolhouse was built in 1872, facing the Green. This was two stories high and was called the Academy. It was used as a school until 1949 and is now the Canton Volunteer Fire Company Firehouse.



LOG SCHOOLHOUSE, EAST HILL

The log schoolhouse on East Hill was replaced by a frame structure in 1798. It stood about twenty feet south of the present building, which was built in 1832. Our forefathers deliberated carefully and sometimes long in deciding on the sites for public buildings. We read in the records of three meetings concerning the building of this school. At the first one it was voted to build a schoolhouse "the bigness of the old one" and to procure an open stove. A week later it was voted "to sit the new schoolhouse the bigness of it to the north." The next meeting reconsidered this and voted "to sit the new schoolhouse twelve feet farther to the north than the old one now stands." This 1832 house still stands, and is the home of the East Hill Community Club.



LOG SCHOOLHOUSE, NORTH CANTON

An old drawing pictures a log schoolhouse in North Canton in 1750. In 1759 the red schoolhouse, a frame building, was built in the fork of the road near Mr. Tilton's, facing the south. A new school was built in 1872 on the same site. The old red schoolhouse was auctioned off to Ruggles Case, who moved it to his meadow south of the church, where his son Henry used it to store furs. When the 1872 house was moved to its present location, in 1927, the little red building was town down to make room for it. A Select School was built in 1832 on the west side of the main road just beyond the North Canton Volunteer Fire Department fire house. The foundation stones can still be seen. The select schools were not run by the town, but were managed by groups of parents who wanted their children to get a higher education than that afforded by the district schools.

The first school in Canton Center, called the old red school, was built in 1759 across the road from Mrs. Mollie Webster's house, a little farther south. This was used until 1847 when a larger building became necessary. The old red schoolhouse was sold and moved to Collinsville, where it was used as a saloon, down near the Arch. Plans were all made for the new school, but trouble developed over the site. So hot did the



OLD RED SCHOOLHOUSE, CANTON CENTER, 1759

argument grow that the Middle district was divided, forming the Center and South Center districts. The South Center bought a piece of land south of the Conference House and opened school in the new building in the fall of 1848, but the Center group did not decide on a site and build until a year later. These schools were discontinued in 1942, the Center schoolhouse becoming a home and the other the property of the church.

The first school in River District was built on the bank of the Farmington River below the Towne bridge in 1775. In 1868 it was moved by oxen to Guildersleeve Avenue where it was a home until 1890 when it burned down. A new school was built in 1868 on the corner knoll northwest of E. Raymond Bristol's house. This one story red building was raised to two stories in 1895, and was closed in 1910 when the pupils were sent to Collinsville. The building was used as a dwelling for a few years, then was moved to Torrington Avenue, now the home of Thomas Pillon.

Most of the land in the West, or Pike District, as it was often called was originally in the town of New Hartford. The first schoolhouse in this section of Canton was built in 1815. It stood on the west side of Albany Turnpike near the foot of Indian Hill, opposite the Colonial Motel. When it became too small, a new one was built in 1850 nearly opposite the home of Burton Bidwell. This school was given up in 1910

and the pupils were transported to Canton Center. The 1815 building was sold and for many years was the home of Harrison French and his son Morton. (A small trace can still be seen, called the "Half house") The one built in 1850 was made into a home by John Ryan, and is now the home of Thomas Murphy.

Collinsville became a school district in 1831. By 1837 the village had grown so that there were two districts, one each side of the river. An article written by Mrs. Elizabeth Warren in 1901 has this sentence — "How many can recall the time when a street lined with tenements climbed the hills on either side to end squarely in front of a neat white schoolhouse, the very crown of the village?" Ten years later the two districts were united, and the first building, a temporary affair and looking, it is said, like a ropewalk, stood at the east end of the bulkhead. A Union schoolhouse was built in 1854, located west of the Congregational Church. The building was of wood, 62 feet long and 42 feet wide, and could accommodate 250 to 300 scholars. The largest room on the second floor was occupied by the High School and the building is known as the High School. Later it had one addition built on the western end. The High School attracted pupils from other districts and the population of the village increased, so that two more buildings were built, the Spring Street School before 1900 and the other soon after. When the new High School was built in 1935 the old High School and one of the others was torn down, only the Spring Street school remaining. This is now owned by the Red Men, and provides a meeting place for many organizations.

PART V  
CHURCHES  
BY LOIS BRISTOL



The first Church or Meeting House as it was called in those days was built at Canton Center in 1763. This was taken down in 1814 and the present structure erected on the same site. Prior to 1763 religious services were held on the Sabbath in private houses. In 1750 the General Assembly constituted this part of Simsbury as a separate parish, called The First Ecclesiastical Society of West Simsbury. In 1874 the Church was modernized, an arched ceiling was put in and the galleries removed, one row of stained glass windows replacing the two rows of plain windows. The high pulpit was also removed. The Church is surmounted with a steeple, neat in appearance, of a type which tends to adorn and beautify our New England village. The Rev. Evander Morrison was its first pastor.

A hearse house used to stand northwest of the Church and in the early days a pound for stray animals was southwest of the Church. A long line of horse sheds extended both north and south of the Church.

In 1783 a number of persons in West Simsbury, now Canton, separated themselves from the Canton Center Church and formed a church, consisting of about 30 members and called themselves Separatists or Strict Congregationalists. In the year 1784 the Rev. James Bacon became their first pastor.



After a short period of three years (1787) a dissension took place in which Mr. Bacon with about half of the church members embraced the Baptist faith and were baptized. After Mr. Bacon left, the Church remained in a low and declining state for about ten years. There were few meetings and a visiting pastor occasionally. A news item in the local paper written some years later states it in a tactful way. "A large swarm of bees are now working in the tower of the Baptist Church in Canton Village. They are not often disturbed by the ringing of the church bell, as religious services are very seldom held in the Church the present season."

In the year 1802 Elisha Case, 2nd., was chosen deacon and things looked up a bit. At a meeting held at the home of Uriah Case in 1807, a committee was chosen to raise money to build this present building. According to the records \$798.22 was raised. It was also decided that any other religious denominations might use it occasionally when not in use by the Baptists.

The Church stood on what is now Canton Green, and was moved to its present location in 1838 on land purchased from Pomeroy Higley.

This is the original Church and stands on the north side of Albany Turnpike, facing south. This Church has four large, fluted columns,



supporting a deep overhang on the front side. The windows are the old stained glass, leaded windows. The Church steeple is in three graduated square sizes with fluted columns to match the columns below. This steeple holds the original bell installed in 1839, made by the makers of the Independence Bell at Philadelphia. It has a good tone and can be heard a long distance on a clear day. The interior of the building has been changed — the present pulpit is part of the first old high pulpit. The galleries were removed about 1911. The dining room where the church people have their church suppers was built in the front of the Church (upstairs into the overhang or porch of the Church.)

This Church, with its original frame, is the oldest church in this town and is a fine example of a typical New England Colonial Church.

The First Congregational Church of Collinsville was organized in 1832 with 33 members, 20 males and 13 females. They came from 11 different churches, the largest number from Canton Center. The Rev. H. M. Brimsmade was the first pastor. It soon became necessary for larger quarters and land for the new building was bought from Correl Humphrey in 1826 and the attractive building was erected at the expense of the Collins Company. The first edifice was dedicated December 27, 1836.

On the night of January 18, 1857, the first church building was destroyed by fire. The weather was very cold with high winds and the surrounding buildings, including the new school recently built, were saved by throwing snow upon them. The building was immediately replaced by the present structure which was dedicated February 25, 1858.

Its architecture is typical of the beautiful Congregational Churches throughout New England. Its steeple, tall and graceful, houses a bell whose sweet tones echo through the valley, calling its worshippers to Service.

Its setting is ideal, facing the Green, and is really the beauty spot of our Village.

| Canton's Churches                                | Organized | Built |
|--------------------------------------------------|-----------|-------|
| First Congregational Church, Canton Center.....  | 1750      | 1763  |
| Canton Baptist Church .....                      | 1787      | 1807  |
| First Congregational Church of Collinsville..... | 1832      | 1836  |
| St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Church.....         | 1856      | 1852  |
| North Canton Methodist Episcopal Church.....     | 1870      | 1871  |
| Trinity Episcopal Church .....                   | 1875      | 1876  |
| St. Matthew's Lutheran Church.....               | 1885      | 1893  |
| Swedish Evangelical Pilgrim Church.....          | 1887      | 1893  |

MEMORIAL SKETCHES OF REV. GEORGE B. ATWELL  
(Pearls for the Poor)

“While in Meriden in 1837, Mr. Atwell received calls from churches in Milford, Haddam, and Suffield, but his work awaited him in the quiet village lying in the midst of hills and mountains, known in the olden time as Suffrage, in the town of Canton, Conn.

“His first visit to Canton was at the close of a spring day, when he found himself in a pleasant village street, and conspicuous in its center was an old fashioned meeting house, without steeple, unpainted, and homely, but gilded and gloried for the moment by the rays of the setting sun. The church was the oldest and had been one of the most influential of the denomination in that part of the state. It was the only Baptist church in the town, and its members and sympathizers comprised the majority of a community that reached over the outlying hills and included thrifty householders and owners of thriving farms and orchards. There were men of means, who by hard-wrought accumulation of cents and dollars had become rich without knowing it, and without knowing or fully apprehending the responsibilities that rightfully belong to a Christian church.

“Mr. Atwell preached in the old meeting-house, and some of the people went to hear him. The third time he preached, a goodly number congregated. This was followed by a meeting of the society. They wanted him for their pastor but feared they could not support him.

When told that was the only objection, he replied, 'Then I will come; for I know you *can* support me, and I have no doubt that you will'.

"So he brought his family to the little maple-shaded parsonage, and began preaching in the old fashioned meeting-house, which may we never forget! Outside doors fronting in various directions; the square, high-backed pews; the lofty, over-hanging pulpit, ornamented on occasions of evening service with a pair of huge wooden yellow-painted candlesticks, for which candles of extra size must be especially made; the long, quaint galleries; the choir of comely young matrons . . .

In the year 1838 there were 52 converts, many of them young people, who were baptized and united with the church.

". . . Mr. Atwell had been in consultation with some of the members of the church, and had proposed the plan of building a new house of worship. This proved a heavy ball to set in motion. 'After debating pro's and con's, opposite forces were equalized and the ball began to roll.' The church was moved and renovated. In a private letter of August 30, 1839, he says — 'We have had our dedication, all harmonious and pleasing, 16 ministers present, and all seemed to think it the most pleasant country church they ever saw. We have bargained for a bell, weight 800 pounds, and our good people appear delighted and pleased'."













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